"A clever and timely conversation on reclaiming identity and acknowledging one's full worth."
—*Kirkus Reviews*

SUPERMAN SMASHES THE KLAN

#1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *American Born Chinese*

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SUPERMAN SMASHES THE KLAN

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For kids everywhere.
—Gene and Gurihiru

Including my own.
—Gene

CHAPTER 1

THE METROPOLIS DAM. 1946.

TREMBLE, AMERICAN SCUM!

TREMBLE BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE ***ATOM MAN,*** AVENGER OF THE ***MASTER RACE!***

BKAM!

EXCUSE ME, MR. ATOM MAN? ***LOIS LANE,*** DAILY PLANET. THIS IS MY ASSOCIATE ***JIMMY OLSEN.***

HIYA!

I'VE GOT A FEW QUESTIONS FOR YOU, IF YOU DON'T MIND.

B-BUT THE ATOM MAN ***DOES*** MIND! THE ATOM MAN MINDS ***VERY MUCH!***

GREAT. FIRST QUESTION: WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO ACCOMPLISH BY BUSTING A HOLE IN THE ***METROPOLIS DAM?***

REVENGE. ***GOT IT.*** SECOND QUESTION: HAVE YOU ***ACTUALLY*** THOUGHT THIS THROUGH?

REVENGE! YOU AMERICAN SCUM ***HUMILIATED*** THE MASTER RACE! NOW, THE ATOM MAN WILL—

I GUESS WHAT I'M ***REALLY*** ASKING IS—

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD OF METROPOLIS' ***MOST FAMOUS CITIZEN?***

SNAP!

GOOD OL' LOIS AND JIMMY—

—SO **FEARLESS.** HONESTLY, I FIND THEM **INSPIRING.**

GASP!

THE SUPERMAN!

OOF!

POW!

NO **"THE,"** THE **"THE"** IS A BIT **PRETENTIOUS,** DON'T YOU THINK?

HEYYY! SO YOU **HAVE** HEARD OF HIM!

SNAP

IT'S JUST **"SUPERMAN,"** PLEASE.

THE ATOM MAN DOES NOT FEAR THE SO-CALLED **SUPER-STRENGTH** OF THE SUPERMAN!

YOU SEE, THIS **MASTERFULLY ENGINEERED DEVICE** PUMPS **SUPER-SUPER-STRENGTH** INTO THE ATOM MAN'S HEART!

NAZI SCIENCE MADE THE ATOM MAN VERY MUCH STRONGER THAN THE SUPERMAN! HA HA!

POW!

HM. IMPRESSIVE RIGHT HOOK.

BUT "VERY MUCH STRONGER"...

BAM!

BAM!

BAM!

IS PUSHING IT...

DON'T YOU THINK?

NGH...

THE ATOM MAN PROMISES THAT WHEN THE ATOM MAN NEXT RETURNS—

Click!

—THE SUPERMAN SHALL TREMBLE BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE ATOM MAN!

FWOOOM!

LEAP, SUPERMAN, LEAP! HE'S GETTING AWAY!

HE'S NOT GONNA LEAP. HE'S GONNA KNOCK HIM OUT OF THE SKY.

WHY WAIT, ATOM MAN?!

WHY NOT MAKE ME TREMBLE RIGHT NOW?!

KRUNK!

FSSS!

MS. LANE, HOW'D YOU KNOW—?

IT'S MY **JOB** TO KNOW. SUPERMAN'S ***FASTER*** THAN A SPEEDING BULLET—

KRASH!

"—MORE ***POWERFUL*** THAN A LOCOMOTIVE, ABLE TO ***LEAP*** TALL BUILDINGS IN A SINGLE BOUND!"

I'VE READ YOUR ARTICLE MANY, MANY TIMES.

THEN YOU KNOW THAT EVEN SUPERMAN HAS HIS ***LIMITS.*** THE HIGHEST HE'S EVER LEAPT IS ***TWENTY STORIES.*** IT'S NOT LIKE HE CAN ***FLY.***

THE ATOM MAN WAS OUT OF RANGE.

WEEEOOO! WEEEOOO!

LET'S SEE ABOUT TURNING OFF THAT "***MASTERFULLY ENGINEERED DEVICE***"!

HNN...

IT'S THE SMELL THAT HITS ME FIRST.

*LIKE ASH AND ROT AND...**SOMETHING ELSE.** **SOMETHING** SO FAMILIAR IT BRINGS TEARS TO MY EYES.*

YET FOR THE LIFE OF ME, I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT IT IS.

THE SMELL FIRST, THEN THE **PAIN.**

FOR AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, I'VE **PRETENDED.** WHENEVER SOMEBODY ACCIDENTALLY BUMPED INTO ME OR STEPPED ON MY TOE, I'VE HAD TO FAKE A **WINCE.** BUT THIS...

THIS IS **REAL.**

IF THAT **WEIRD GREEN CRYSTAL** CAN AFFECT EVEN **ME,** IT'LL **KILL** THE OTHERS.

LOIS... JIMMY...STAY BACK...!

OH NO...WHAT HAPPENED TO MY HAND?!

SUPERMAN...?

THE DEVICE ON ATOM MAN'S CHEST... THE SOURCE OF HIS **POWER**...IT'S...

—IT'S NO LONGER A *CONCERN.*

INSPECTOR HENDERSON...!

CRACK!

WILL YOU LOOK AT THAT! WITHOUT HIS FANCY GADGET, HE'S JUST A SCRAWNY KID!

THE ATOM MAN...IS DONE FOR...

YOU SAVING THAT LID FOR A SOUVENIR, SUPERMAN?

NO... HERE YOU GO...

IS HE JUST ***TOO POLITE*** TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT MY HAND?

YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD... YOU'RE NOT COMING DOWN WITH A COLD, ARE YOU? I DIDN'T KNOW THAT WAS EVEN ***POSSIBLE!***

I'M...OKAY, INSPECTOR.

SNAP

NOW THAT THE **GREEN CRYSTAL** IS SEALED UP AGAIN, MY HAND IS BACK TO NORMAL! THE PAIN IS GONE, TOO...BUT I CAN STILL SMELL THE **SMELL.**

CHICKEN SOUP, BIG GUY. ***SOUP*** WILL MAKE YOU ***SUPER*** AGAIN IN NO TIME.

GET IT? "SOUP-ER"? HA HA!

I'D BE HAPPY TO BRING OVER A POT FOR YOU, SUPERMAN.

IN EXCHANGE FOR SOME ***ANSWERS.***

NO NEED TO BRIBE ME WITH ***SOUP,*** MS. LANE. I'M ***ALWAYS*** HAPPY TO TALK WITH YOU.

GOOD. BECAUSE I'M A ***TERRIBLE*** COOK.

OH, I CAN'T IMAGINE YOU BEING TERRIBLE AT ANYTHING.

A CONVERSATION FOR ***TWO,*** I SEE...

AHEM. ***SUPERMAN.*** THERE ARE PLENTY OF THEORIES AS TO HOW YOU BECAME... WELL, ***SUPER.***

SOME SAY YOU DRANK A ***MEGAVITAMIN SERUM.*** OTHERS SAY YOU WERE EXPOSED TO ***RADIATION*** AT AN EARLY AGE.

STILL OTHERS SAY YOUR EXTRAORDINARY ABILITIES ARE THE RESULT OF TRAINING WITH A ***CULT OF MYSTICS*** IN THE HIMALAYAS.

CARE TO CONFIRM ANY OF THOSE?

HA HA! TRAINING IN THE HIMALAYAS! I LIKE THAT. LET'S GO WITH THAT ONE.

I WANT THE ***TRUTH!***

AND KNOWING YOU, YOU'LL GET IT SOMEDAY. JUST NOT TODAY.

MY CHICKEN SOUP OFFER STILL STANDS!

SNAP!

I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU'RE A TERRIBLE COOK!

JIMMY! GOOD TO SEE YOU!

RIGHT BACK ATCHA, SUPERMAN!

I PUT ON MY BEST SMILE AS I LEAVE. NO SENSE WORRYING LOIS OR JIMMY.

*NO MATTER HOW FAST I RUN, THOUGH, I CAN'T GET AWAY FROM THAT **SMELL.***

*I THINK I'M GOING TO BE **SICK.***

I THINK I'M GOING TO BE *SICK.*

UGH...

I'M NOT SURE IF IT'S THE WAY THE CAR IS MOVING OR THE FACT THAT WE JUST LEFT THE ONLY HOME I'VE EVER KNOWN. MAYBE *BOTH.*

LAN-SHIN, ARE YOU NOT FEELING WELL?

MA CAME TO AMERICA A FEW MONTHS BEFORE MARRYING DAD. SHE'S STILL MOST COMFORTABLE SPEAKING CANTONESE.

IN *ENGLISH,* DEAR.

YES...YOU RIGHT. I FORGET. LAN-SHIN, YOU YOU...

INCLUDING OUR *NAMES.*

ROBERTA, YOU...BAD TUMMY?

THE CAR IS MAKING MY STOMACH A BIT *GURGLY,* IS ALL.

AW, WHY DO YOU ALWAYS GOTTA BE SUCH A *POOPER,* ROBERTA?

THIS IS *WAY* MORE *FUN* THAN THE BUS!

YES, TOMMY. I'M PURPOSELY MAKING MY STOMACH *GURGLY* JUST TO RUIN YOUR *FUN.*

PERHAPS YOU'LL FEEL BETTER IF YOU LOOK OUT THE WINDOW.

WHOAAA.

CAN YOU BELIEVE WE GET TO LIVE IN *METROPOLIS*, SIS?

WE'VE LIVED IN METROPOLIS OUR *WHOLE LIVES*, DUMMY!

HEY! WHO'RE YOU CALLING A *DUMMY?!*

WHO'RE YOU CALLING A *POOPER?!*

CHILDREN! SETTLE DOWN!

AND TOMMY IS RIGHT. WE LIVED IN *CHINATOWN.* IT'S NOT THE SAME. YOU'LL SEE.

THE *DAILY PLANET* BUILDING LOOKS LIKE IT'S STRAIGHT OUTTA THE *FUTURE!* HOW DOES *THAT* NOT MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER, SIS?

BLARF—

IT'S STILL THERE, EVEN AFTER I CHANGED OUT OF MY SUPERMAN UNIFORM. I CAN'T SEEM TO SHAKE THE SMELL OF THAT **GREEN CRYSTAL.**

SNIFF SNIFF

I BROUGHT YOU COFFEE, CLARK.

LOIS! HI! TH-THANKS!

WHERE WERE YOU THIS MORNING?

I HAD TO TAKE CARE OF A, UM...AN ***ERRAND*** BEFORE COMING IN TO WORK.

WELL, YOU MISSED OUT ON A TREMENDOUS STORY. ***AGAIN.***

I HAD TO TAKE JIMMY WITH ME INSTEAD. ***AGAIN.***

LANE! YOU'VE REALLY DONE IT THIS TIME!

SUPERMAN VERSUS A ***NAZI CREEP*** WHO NEVER GOT THE MEMO THAT WE WON THE WAR?! OH, BE STILL MY HEART!

TREMENDOUS WORK, LANE!

THANK YOU, PERRY.

SEE, CLARK? ***TREMENDOUS.***

UH... KENT? WHY IN *TARNATION* ARE YOU SNIFFING YOURSELF LIKE THAT?

OH! *UM...*

DO LAUNDRY ONCE IN A WHILE AND YOU WON'T HAVE THAT PROBLEM.

HEH HEH! APPRECIATE THE *ADVICE,* LOIS!

WELP, BACK TO WORK FOR ME! I'LL CATCH YOU TWO LATER!

WAIT, WHERE ARE YOU GOING?! THIS IS *YOUR* OFFICE!

HOW IS *THAT GUY* ONE OF MY BEST REPORTERS?

I ASK MYSELF THAT EVERY DAY.

SPLASH

COME ON, CLARK. GET IT TOGETHER.

AAAH!

HOW...?

A POLICE SIREN IN THE DISTANCE. FIVE MILES AWAY, TOPS.

PA ALWAYS SAID, MINDING YOURSELF TOO MUCH IS A GOOD WAY TO LOSE YOUR MIND.

TIME FOR ME TO MIND SOMEONE ELSE.

EEEW. I GOT THROW-UP ALL OVER MY JACKET. AND MY HANDS.

THIS JACKET'S GOTTEN TOO SMALL FOR YOU, ANYWAY. I'LL SEW YOU A NEW ONE AS SOON AS I CAN.

NO, NO. WE CAN AFFORD TO BUY HER A NEW JACKET NOW.

AND LET'S SPEAK ENGLISH, DEAR.

DAD! NO! LET ME KEEP IT FOR NOW, AT LEAST! PLEEEASE!

I'LL PICK ONE UP AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE THAT DOESN'T LOOK SO... ANTIQUATED. YOU'LL LOVE IT, ROBERTA. YOU'LL SEE.

I'VE WORN THAT JACKET EVERY DAY FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS, EVEN IN THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER.

WITHOUT IT, I'M ALL NERVES. A REAL WEIRDO.

GOODNESS, MY NEW BOSS AND COLLEAGUE HAVE COME TO VISIT! WHERE'S TOMMY?!

INSIDE UNPACKING, I THINK.

THEN IT'S UP TO YOU, ROBERTA! I EXPECT IMPECCABLE MANNERS!

WELCOME TO THE GREAT CITY OF METROPOLIS, LEES!

FAMILY, MAY I INTRODUCE DR. SEGRET WILSON AND DR. WILLIAM JENNINGS!

YOU MUST BE YOUNG ROBERTA! PLEASURE TO MAKE YOUR—

NO—NO HANDSHAKE—THROW-UP!

ROBERTA!

SEE WHAT I MEAN? WEIRDO.

WOW...WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS HOUSE! IT'S NICER THAN *MINE!*

SOME GUYS HAVE ALL THE *LUCK.* MUST BE NICE, EH, LEE?

I BROUGHT YOU FOLKS A PIE.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH. A...A GOOD SMELL.

"A GOOD SMELL"! *HA!* WHAT A THING TO SAY!

DON'T MEAN TO DISAPPOINT, BUT THAT "GOOD SMELL" IS *APPLE,* NOT *DOG.*

THIS JENNINGS GUY IS A *REAL CREEP.*

I'VE GOT A PRESENT FOR YOU, TOO, DR. LEE.

GASP! I WASN'T EXPECTING THIS UNTIL TOMORROW MORNING!

I HEREBY OFFICIALLY APPOINT YOU THE *CHIEF BACTERIOLOGIST* OF THE METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT, DR. LEE. *CONGRATULATIONS!*

THIS MEANS MORE THAN I CAN SAY, DR. WILSON!

MUST BE NICE. MUST BE *REAL* NICE.

IS THAT A BIRD...?

NO, A PLANE.

A *PAPER AIRPLANE.*

MY BROTHER AND I HAVE BEEN PULLING THIS SAME TRICK SINCE WE WERE LITTLE.

Sorry for calling you a pooper. Can we be friends again?
( ) Yes
( ) No

SIGH.

IT WORKS EVERY TIME.

HERE, TOMMY.

Sorry about calling you a pooper. Can we be friends again?

☒ Yes - I am sorry too. You are often not a dummy.

☐ No

I'M FEELING ***GENEROUS***, SIS, SO I'LL LET YOU CHOOSE. TOP BUNK OR BOTTOM?

I'LL TAKE THE BOTTOM.

IF YOU INSIST!

I KNEW HE WANTED THE TOP.

Y'KNOW, THE VIEW UP HERE IS ***SOMETHING ELSE!***

GOSH... IS THAT... IT'S GOTTA BE! AND HE'S COMING ***OUR WAY!***

QUICK, ROBERTA! OUTSIDE!

WHOAAA.

WHOOSH

WAS THAT... *SUPERMAN?*

SURE WAS! HE RUNS ACROSS *TELEPHONE WIRES* SO HE WON'T GET IN THE WAY OF TRAFFIC.

WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD! THE NAME'S *JIMMY OLSEN.* I'M YOUR ACROSS-THE-STREET NEIGHBOR!

HEY, JIMMY! I'M *TOMMY LEE.*

AND YOU ARE...?

ROBERTA— NO HANDSHAKE— THROW-UP!

SIS!

NICE TO MEET THE BOTH OF YOU, TOMMY LEE AND, UH, ROBERTA NOHANDSHAKE THROWUP!

LISTEN, I'M HEADED TO THE *UNITY HOUSE,* OVER ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THE *BASEBALL TEAM* I MANAGE IS ABOUT TO START PRACTICE.

WHY DON'T YOU TWO COME ALONG? I'LL INTRODUCE YOU AROUND.

BASEBALL, HUH?

STRIIIKE THREE!

TURNS OUT *THE UNITY HOUSE* IS A COMMUNITY CENTER STARTED BY—AND THIS SOUNDS LIKE THE SETUP FOR A JOKE, BUT IT'S NOT—A PRIEST, A MINISTER, AND A RABBI.

HOLYYY—!

THAT LEE KID'S GOT A *ROCKET* FOR AN ARM!

YOU SAID IT, FATHER SHAIN. HOLYYY.

JACKET OR NO, YOU CAN DO THIS, ROBERTA. YOU CAN MAKE FRIENDS.

YOU WASHED YOUR HANDS AND EVERYTHING.

THEY WANTED TO BRING THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF METROPOLIS *TOGETHER.*

EVEN THE *WEIRDOS.*

HI. I'M *ROBERTA LEE.*

I WASHED MY HANDS.

UM? THAT'S VERY, UH...*CLEAN* OF YOU.

WAIT...THE PITCHER MUST BE YOUR BROTHER! ARE YOU CHINESE OR JAPANESE?

CHINESE.

OH, THANK GOODNESS! Y'KNOW, I'VE NEVER MET A *CHINESE* BEFORE! UP CLOSE LIKE THIS, I MEAN!

YOUR BROTHER'S *SPECTACULAR!* YOU THINK IT'D BE OKAY IF I GO SAY HELLO? HOW DO YOU SAY HELLO IN CHINESE?

NEIH HOU.

BUT WE SPEAK ENGLISH, TOO.

OBVIOUSLY.

IS THIS WHAT MY LIFE WILL BE LIKE FROM NOW ON? ALWAYS WATCHING FROM THE *SIDELINES?*

SIGH.

I MISS MY JACKET.

I MISS *HOME.*

—JUST *SPECTACULAR!*

AW, IT WAS NOTHIN'!

A *ROCKET* FOR AN ARM, I TELL YOU!

PERHAPS WE SHOULD—

WAY AHEAD OF YOU, RABBI STONE!

HEY, TOMMY! I GOT SOMETHING FOR YOU!

WILL YA LOOK AT THAT! THE CAP'S A PERFECT FIT! HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE UNITY HOUSE BASEBALL TEAM?

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

ATTABOY, TOMMY!

HEY, *NEW KID!* HOW ABOUT YOU SHOW ME WHATCHA GOT?!

NOW, HOLD ON A SECOND, CHUCK! THAT'S NO WAY TO TALK TO YOUR NEW TEAMMATE!

WHO'S THAT?

CHUCK RIGGS, OUR STARTING PITCHER. OR HE *WAS,* AT LEAST, BEFORE *YOU* CAME ALONG.

MY NAME'S *TOMMY*, NOT "NEW KID"! AND I'LL BE HAPPY TO SHOW YOU WHAT I GOT AS SOON AS YOU STOP *CROWDING THE PLATE!*

BAH! JUST PITCH!

STEP BACK! I'M AFRAID I MIGHT *BEAN* YOU!

LISTEN TO HIM, CHUCK! *GET BACK!*

AW! YOU'RE *AFRAID?!*

PITCH, YA YELLOW BANANA!

FINE.

OW!

SMACK!

UH

CHUCK!

UH

CRIPES!

WHAT KIND OF KID WEARS *BOOTS* TO BASEBALL PRACTICE?

CHUCK! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!

HNN...

I'M SO SORRY! CAN I HELP YOU UP, BUDDY?

I'M NOT YOUR "BUDDY," *CHINA BOY!*

MR. RIGGS! WATCH YOUR WORDS!
YOU SAW WHAT HAPPENED, REVEREND LEEDS! THAT *CHINA—*
THAT *CHINESE KID* BEANED ME!
HEY, I TOLD YOU TO STEP BACK!
IT WAS AN *ACCIDENT*, CHUCK! AND HE *APOLOGIZED!* AS MANAGER OF THIS TEAM, I'M GONNA ASK *YOU* TO APOLOGIZE TO TOMMY FOR CALLING HIM NAMES!
I'M NOT APOLOGIZING! NOT TO THE LIKES OF *HIM!*
THEN I'M SORRY, CHUCK.
YOU'RE FIRED.
YOU KIDDING ME, OLSEN?! WE GOT THE CHAMPIONSHIP COMING UP! YOU'RE REALLY GONNA CHOOSE THIS...THIS *CHING-CHONG* OVER *ME?*
CALL ME THAT AGAIN, I DARE YOU!
GUYS, GUYS! STOP!

CHUCK— NO FIGHTING— COWARD!

HA! THERE'S A *CHINA GIRL,* TOO?

A CHINA GIRL WHO BARELY SPEAKS *ENGLISH.*

I FOCUS ON WHAT I HAVE TO DO TO PROTECT TOMMY.

...

I SPEAK ENGLISH *JUST FINE.*

WHAT I'M ASKING IS, ARE YOU THE KIND OF *COWARD* WHO'S WILLING TO FIGHT A GIRL HALF YOUR SIZE?

BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT YOU'LL HAVE TO DO TO GET TO *HIM.*

HERE, CHINA GIRL.

MAYBE OLSEN'LL INVITE *YOU* ON THE TEAM, TOO.

COME ON, EVERYBODY! FORGET THAT *SOREHEAD!* WE GOT A PRACTICE TO RUN!

LATER...

CHUCK! CHUCK RIGGS!

YOUR MOTHER PAID GOOD MONEY FOR THIS JERSEY! WHY'S IT IN THE TRASH?!

I...I GOT FIRED FROM THE TEAM, UNCLE MATT.

A KID ACCIDENTALLY BEANED ME AND I LOST MY ***TEMPER.*** YOU'RE ALWAYS TELLING ME NOT TO LOSE MY TEMPER.

THAT'S RIGHT. A MAN'S CHARACTER IS ROOTED IN HIS ***SELF-CONTROL.***

YOU'LL GO BACK AND ***APOLOGIZE*** TOMORROW. IT WILL BE GOOD FOR BOTH YOU AND THE TEAM. THEY'RE GOING TO NEED THEIR ***STARTING PITCHER.***

OH, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT. THE NEW KID, THE ONE WHO BEANED ME, HAS A GREAT ***FASTBALL.*** OLSEN PROBABLY GAVE HIM MY SPOT.

WHAT?! LET ME GUESS: THIS KID'S NAME IS ***KOWALSKI*** OR ***O'MALLEY*** OR ***SOMETHING-STEIN!***

HIS NAME IS ***TOMMY LEE.***

"LEE"...I HEARD ABOUT THAT FAMILY! HIS FATHER MUST BE THE ONE WHO TOOK THE JOB AT THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT!

SO THIS LEE KID ***BEANS*** YOU, THEN ***REPLACES*** YOU? ABSOLUTELY ***DEVIOUS.***

FIRST THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, NOW THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND EVEN A KIDS' BASEBALL TEAM... WHAT IS THIS CITY COMING TO?

I DON'T KNOW IF HE MEANT IT LIKE ***THAT,*** UNCLE MATT...

OH, DON'T BE ***NAIVE,*** CHUCK! HIS KIND ARE DEVIOUS ***BY NATURE!***

I'M TAKING YOU TO A MEETING TONIGHT. WE'RE GOING TO MAKE SURE THAT FOLKS LIKE YOU AND ME AREN'T ***REPLACED*** EVER AGAIN!

WHAT ARE *YOU* SO SORE ABOUT?!

I DON'T NEED MY LITTLE SISTER DEFENDING ME, ROBERTA! THAT WAS *HUMILIATING!*

TOMMY, YOU JUST STARTED MAKING *FRIENDS* HERE! YOU JUST GOT YOURSELF A BRAND-NEW *BASEBALL CAP!*

AND YOU WERE JUST GONNA *SOCK* THAT JERK IN FRONT OF *JIMMY* AND THOSE *OTHER KIDS* AND THOSE *HOLY-ROLLERS?!* WHAT DO YOU THINK WOULD'VE HAPPENED THEN?!

THAT JERK WOULD'VE *THOUGHT TWICE* BEFORE CALLING ME NAMES NEXT TIME!

NO, YOU DUMMY! YOU WOULD'VE HAD TO *GIVE BACK* YOUR STUPID BASEBALL CAP, THAT'S WHAT!

FITTING IN COMES SO *EASILY* TO YOU, YOU'VE NEVER EVEN THOUGHT ABOUT HOW YOU ACTUALLY DO IT!

...

ROBERTA! WAIT!

YOU SEE THE WAY CHUCK LOOKED AT YOU WHEN YOU STOOD UP TO HIM?

TALK ABOUT A *DUMMY.* HA HA!

THIS IS AN *HISTORIC EVENT,* CHUCK.

THE FIRST OF ITS KIND HERE IN *METROPOLIS.*

UNCLE MATT, WHAT—?

WHEN I AM IN UNIFORM, YOU WILL ADDRESS ME AS THE *GRAND SCORPION.*

TAKE YOURS FROM THE BOX, THOUGH YOU'RE NOT TO WEAR IT UNTIL AFTER WE COMPLETE THE *INITIATION CEREMONY.*

B-BUT, UNCLE— I MEAN, *GRAND SCORPION,* WHY ARE WE HERE?! I-I READ ABOUT THIS AT SCHOOL...ISN'T THIS A GROUP OF HATEFUL *BIGOTS?!*

LIES PERPETUATED BY *CORRUPT* NEWSPAPERS AND TEXTBOOKS! WE DON'T *HATE* ANYONE, CHUCK!

ON THE CONTRARY, WE ARE MOTIVATED BY LOVE— *LOVE OF OUR NATION!*

A NATION WILL CRUMBLE TO *DUST* UNLESS ITS PEOPLE ARE UNITED AS *ONE.* YOU UNDERSTAND?

AND IT IS *IMPOSSIBLE* TO UNITE AN *IMPURE PEOPLE!*

ONE RACE! ONE COLOR! ONE RELIGION!

THAT IS THE MISSION OF THE *KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS...*

TO BURN AWAY AMERICA'S IMPURITIES!

IT'S GOTTEN **WORSE.** MY ENTIRE APARTMENT IS NOW FILLED WITH THAT SMELL.

BUT HOW CAN THAT BE? THE **GREEN CRYSTAL** IS SAFELY IN THE HANDS OF THE METROPOLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

IT'S ALL IN MY HEAD. IT **HAS** TO BE.

MAYBE I **AM** COMING DOWN WITH SOMETHING. I BET I CAN FIND A CAN OF **CHICKEN SOUP** IN THE KITCHEN CUPBOARD.

BRBL...
BRBL...
BRBL...

?!

SOMEONE'S BROKEN IN!

IT'LL BE TOO OBVIOUS IF I CHANGE INTO UNIFORM NOW. I'LL HAVE TO CONFRONT THEM AS **CLARK.**

BRBL...
BRBL...
BRBL...

MA...?

PA...?

?!
THIS IS A DREAM, RIGHT? YOU'RE A DREAM!
THEIR VOICES...
I'VE HEARD THEIR VOICES BEFORE.
SMALLVILLE. 1926.
CLARK! COME LOOK AT THIS!
I'VE BEEN TINKERING WITH IT FOR MONTHS AND MONTHS!
WHAT IS IT, PA?

CAN'T SAY FOR SURE, BUT I THINK IT'S SOME SORT OF RECORDING DEVICE, LIKE A PHONOGRAPH. *LISTEN.*

Click

[illegible]

SOUNDS LIKE PEOPLE TALKING IN SOME OTHER LANGUAGE! WHERE'D YOU GET IT?

IT WAS WITH YOU WHEN WE FOUND YOU, SON.

JONATHAN, DEAR? MIGHT I HAVE A WORD?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

HE'S BEEN *ASKING* QUESTIONS EVER SINCE HE FIGURED OUT HE'S *ADOPTED.* DON'T YOU WANT HIM TO HAVE *ANSWERS?*

EVENTUALLY, I SUPPOSE, BUT NOT YET!

MARTHA, OUR SON IS *EXTRAORDINARY.* AND HE DESERVES TO KNOW *JUST* HOW EXTRAORDINARY!

OF COURSE HE'S EXTRAORDINARY! HE'S—

NO, NO. LISTEN. THAT ROCKET SHIP HE CAME IN...YOU KNOW HOW I THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE GERMAN? OR JAPANESE?

I'VE TAKEN A GOOD LONG LOOK AT THE *PARTS* THAT WE WERE ABLE TO SALVAGE, MARTHA, AND I CAN GUARANTEE IT DIDN'T JUST COME ACROSS AN *OCEAN.* IT CAME FROM—

PLEASE, JONATHAN. *NOT YET.*

MA AND PA WERE A GOOD DISTANCE AWAY, TALKING QUIETLY. THEY DIDN'T THINK I COULD HEAR THEM.

BUT I COULD.

I HEARD EVERY WORD.

EAT

YOU WANT ME TO EAT?

ALL RIGHT...IF THAT'S HOW THE DREAM'S SUPPOSED TO GO.

IS THIS CHICKEN SOUP?

SIP

NOPE. DEFINITELY NOT. IT'S GOOD, THOUGH.

AN OLD FAMILY RECIPE. UNFORTUNATELY, WE DON'T HAVE *CHICKENS* WHERE WE'RE FROM.

WAIT—I CAN UNDERSTAND YOU! WHO *ARE* YOU?

HE ASKED WHO *WE* ARE, LOVE.

BUT THE REAL QUESTION IS... WHO IS HE?

WH-WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?

ISN'T IT OBVIOUS? SLOWLY, IMPERFECTLY, BUT INEVITABLY...

YOU'RE REMEMBERING.

LOOK AT THIS BEAUTIFUL NEW JACKET YOUR FATHER BOUGHT FOR YOU!

IT IS BEAUTIFUL...BUT IT SMELLS LIKE *PLASTIC.*

MY OLD JACKET SMELLED LIKE *YOU.*

LAN-SHIN, WHEN I FIRST CAME TO AMERICA, I FELT *LOST,* EVEN IN CHINATOWN. BUT SLOWLY, I FIGURED THINGS OUT.

THE CORNER BAKERY, FOR INSTANCE, SERVED THE BEST EGG TARTS ON *TUESDAYS* BECAUSE THAT WAS THE ONLY DAY THE OWNER'S GRANDFATHER CAME IN TO BAKE.

AND THE WOODEN BENCH AT THE VERY EDGE OF THE PARK WAS THE BEST PLACE FOR YOUR FATHER AND ME TO WATCH THE *SUNSET.*

AND THE GRUMPY LADY WHO RAN THE TEA SHOP WASN'T REALLY GRUMPY AT ALL. SHE WAS ACTUALLY *SWEET* AND *WARMHEARTED,* ONCE YOU GOT TO KNOW HER.

BEFORE I KNEW IT, I'D FALLEN IN LOVE WITH CHINATOWN.

YOU UNDERSTAND? IF YOU LEARN ENOUGH *SECRETS* ABOUT A PLACE, IT BECOMES *HOME.*

GOOD NIGHT, DARLING.

GOOD NIGHT, MA.

SIGH.

KRKL KRKL

LIGHT...? FROM OUTSIDE...?

KRKL...
KRKL...
KRKL...
TOMMY!
WHO—?!
I-I DON'T KNOW, SIS!

CHILDREN! GET BACK FROM THE WINDOW!

THEY LOOK LIKE GHOSTS!

WE HAVE THEIR ATTENTION, GRAND SCORPION!

MY FELLOW KNIGHTS, I WARNED YOU THAT THESE NON-AMERICANS WOULD NOT BE SATISFIED WITH THEIR OWN FILTHY CORNERS OF OUR CITY!

SOONER OR LATER, THEY WOULD CRAWL OUT TO INFEST OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT, OUR GOVERNMENT, AND OUR VERY NEIGHBORHOODS!

AND THIS PARTICULAR RACE IS A PERPETUAL, UNCHANGING, AND UNCHANGEABLE ALIEN ELEMENT THAT CAN NEVER TRULY BE A PART OF US!

THEIR CULTURE IS DEMORALIZING AND DEGRADING TO OUR PEOPLE! THEY CAN NEVER BECOME ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICANS!

AND SO WE LOYAL KNIGHTS OF THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS MUST PROCLAIM...

ONE RACE! ONE COLOR! ONE RELIGION!

THEY... THEY'VE GOT THE ***WRONG IDEA*** ABOUT US, IS ALL! I'LL GO OUT EXPLAIN TO THEM—

ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?! CALL THE POLICE!

IN ENGLISH, DEAR!

TO HELL WITH YOUR ENGLISH!

TOMMY! NO!

YOU'RE ONLY GOING TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, SON!

THIS IS *OUR HOME!* THEY'VE GOT *NO RIGHT* TO BE HERE!

GROWN MEN, PLAYING *DRESS-UP* AND BURNING *CAMPFIRES* ON OTHER PEOPLE'S LAWNS? YOU OUGHTA BE *ASHAMED!*

GET OUTTA HERE BEFORE I CRACK YOUR HEADS OPEN!

WE CAME MERELY TO *WARN* YOU, ALIEN! YOU *FORCE* US TO DO *MORE!*

NEW INITIATE, HAND ME YOUR *TORCH!*

BUT—

NEW INITIATE, SHOW THESE NON-AMERICANS WE MEAN BUSINESS!

BUT, GRAND SCORPION, MAYBE THIS ISN'T...

FSSSS...

THROW IT NOW!

GFN!

BOUNCE!

HE'S GOT ON *RED BOOTS.*

BOUNCE...

bounce...

bounce...

OH NO...!

RUN FOR COVER!

BOOM!

YOU IMBECILE! HOW COULD YOU MISS THE WINDOW?!

I, UH...

IT'S... IT'S THE *HOOD!* THE HOOD GOT IN THE WAY!

THE FIRE'S OUTTA CONTROL!

FALL BACK, LOYAL KNIGHTS! WE'VE MADE OUR MESSAGE LOUD AND CLEAR!

GRAB BUCKETS! WE GOTTA PUT IT OUT BEFORE IT REACHES THE HOUSE!

TOMMY!

GOOD LORD! A CROSS-BURNING?! HERE IN METROPOLIS?!

YOUNG MAN! YOU GOT A HOSE?!

I SAW ONE AT THE NEIGHBOR'S!

NO, *NO!* THIS JUST KEEPS GETTING *WORSE AND WORSE!*

DAD, THEY'RE TRYING TO *HELP!*

YOU! NOBODY ASKED YOU TO COME HERE! WE DON'T WANT ANY ***MORE TROUBLE!*** GET OUT OF HERE!

TROUBLE FOUND ***YOU,*** MISTER! WE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT!

NOT HOW I IMAGINED A ***NIGHT OUT ON THE TOWN*** WOULD END.

LIKE MY GRANDMA USED TO SAY, NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED.

APOLOGIES, BUT CAN YOU FELLAS FIND YOUR OWN WAY HOME? I NEED TO STAY.

YOU HEARD THAT CHINESE GUY, BILL!

THEY DON'T WANT US AROUND, NOT EVEN WHEN THEIR HOUSE IS ON ***FIRE!***

THEY GOT A ***BURNING CROSS*** ON THEIR LAWN, DON'T THEY?

FOR TONIGHT, AT LEAST, THEY ***ARE*** US.

EVEN IF THEY DON'T WANT TO ADMIT IT.

SIR, I ASKED YOU TO LEAVE US—

OH...!

I'M— I'M—***PLEASE FORGIVE ME!*** I DIDN'T KNOW...

I'M ***INSPECTOR WILLIAM HENDERSON*** OF THE METROPOLIS POLICE DEPARTMENT.

HOW ABOUT YOU FOLKS TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED?

THE NEXT MORNING...

LOIS! YOU'RE HERE!

MY TURN TO GET COFFEE.

THANKS. UM, CLARK? NO OFFENSE, BUT DID YOU GET *ANY* SLEEP AT ALL LAST NIGHT? YOUR FACE LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEEN RUN OVER BY A *TRUCK.*

YOU'RE WELCOME FOR THE COFFEE, LOIS.

PERRY SENT ME HERE WITHOUT TELLING ME WHY. ANY IDEAS WHAT—

GREAT SCOTT!

OUR MOST RECOGNIZABLE SYMBOL OF *HATE...*

...RIGHT HERE IN *METROPOLIS.*

MS.LANE! MR. KENT! MR. WHITE GOT MY MESSAGE TO YOU!

NO WAY, JIMMY, YOU KNOW *LOIS LANE* AND *CLARK KENT?!*

SURE. DIDN'T I TELL YOU? I'M A CUB REPORTER AT THE *DAILY PLANET!*

I'D HEARD OF METROPOLIS'S TWO MOST FAMOUS REPORTERS, OF COURSE. ANYONE WHO'S READ THE PAPER HAS. BUT TO ACTUALLY SEE THEM IN PERSON?

WILD. NEVER WOULD'VE HAPPENED IN *CHINATOWN.*

I'M CLARK KENT, REPORTER FOR THE *DAILY PLANET.*

I-I'M ROBERTA LEE.

HOW'RE YOU HOLDING UP?

ALL RIGHT—COLD—A LITTLE—

...

I MEAN, I'M ALL RIGHT. JUST A LITTLE COLD.

HOW ABOUT YOU BORROW MY JACKET. THAT BETTER?

YEAH.

FOR REASONS I CAN'T QUITE PUT MY FINGER ON, CLARK KENT SEEMS ODDLY ***FAMILIAR.***

Y'KNOW, I ALWAYS KIND OF SUSPECTED THAT I DON'T ***BELONG.***

LAST NIGHT, WE GOT ***PROOF.***

HUSBAND, WE ***HAVE*** TO MOVE BACK TO CHINATOWN!

DEAR, WE'RE ***NOT*** MOVING AWAY OVER A ***MISUNDERSTANDING!*** WE JUST HAVE TO SHOW THEM WE'RE NOT WHAT THEY THINK WE ARE!

YOU HAVE TO DO WHAT'S BEST FOR YOUR FAMILY, OF COURSE, BUT YOU LEAVING IS ***EXACTLY*** WHAT THOSE BIGOTS WANT!

IF IT HELPS AT ALL WITH YOUR DECISION, I CAN HAVE A SQUAD CAR IN FRONT OF YOUR HOUSE ***24/7.***

I CAN'T BELIEVE DAD TOOK THE TIME TO PUT ON HIS LAB COAT.

ROBERTA... WHAT DO ***YOU*** WANT?

I DON'T SEE HOW WE CAN STAY. NOT AFTER ***THIS.***

IT MUST'VE BEEN ***AWFUL*** LAST NIGHT.

I CAN'T IMAGINE. BUT SHOULD YOUR FAMILY CHOOSE TO STAY, ROBERTA, MR. KENT AND I WILL FIGHT FOR YOU, ***ONE HUNDRED PERCENT.***

THE MEN WHO DID THIS WANT TO KEEP THEIR IDENTITIES ***SECRET,*** AND EXPOSING SECRETS IS ***OUR BUSINESS.***

UNLIKE MR. KENT, LOIS LANE IS DECIDEDLY ***NOT*** FAMILIAR.

SO SURE OF HERSELF...I'VE NEVER MET ANYONE LIKE HER.

SOMEONE TOLD ME RECENTLY, IF YOU UNCOVER ENOUGH ***SECRETS*** ABOUT A PLACE, IT BECOMES ***HOME.***

NOT BAD ADVICE.

COME ON, CLARK. LET'S GO SEE WHAT THE INSPECTOR CAN TELL US.

UNCOVER ENOUGH ***SECRETS*** AND YOU MAKE A ***HOME.***

HUH.

THAT'S NOT BAD ADVICE AT ALL, ROBERTA.

MA, DAD... I WANT TO ***STAY.***

"I ALWAYS KIND OF SUSPECTED THAT I DON'T **BELONG**," ROBERTA SAID.

"LAST NIGHT, WE GOT **PROOF**."

WITHOUT REALLY MEANING TO, I **REMEMBER**.

I REMEMBER WHAT I'D VOWED TO **FORGET**.

SMALLVILLE. 1926.

MY BEST FRIEND **PETE ROSS** AND I USED TO COLLECT **PULP MAGAZINES**.

I ESPECIALLY LOVED **SCIENCE FICTION** STORIES. PETE LIKED ANYTHING **CREEPY**.

WHOA!

CLARKIE, CHECK THIS ONE OUT!

CREEPIEST ONE YET, RIGHT? HA HA!

THOUGH I DIDN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHY, THAT MAGAZINE COVER **EMBARRASSED** ME.

SUDDENLY, I BEGAN HEARING VOICES, THE SAME VOICES THAT HAD COME FROM THAT **PHONOGRAPH-THING** PA HAD SHOWN ME A FEW DAYS BEFORE.

YOU ALL RIGHT, CLARKIE? JEEZ, IT'S NOT *THAT* CREEPY!

I'M ALL RIGHT...

I WAS TOO EMBARRASSED TO ASK IF PETE HEARD THEM, TOO.

I FELT MY FACE GO HOT. NOT MY WHOLE FACE, ACTUALLY.

JUST **MY EYES**.

KYLE, CHECK THIS OUT!

WHAT KINDA *LOSERS* READ THIS STUFF?

HEY! YOU GIVE THAT BACK!

STOP...

KYLE AND KENNY BRAVERMAN WERE THE NEIGHBORHOOD BULLIES.

OUR DAD SAYS THESE SORTSA MAGAZINES ROT A KID'S BRAIN!

WE'RE GONNA DO YOU A *FAVOR*, LOSER!

NO!

HNN...

KYLE, YOU SEE THAT? THE *LOSER* TRIED TO PUNCH ME!

WE'LL HAFTA TEACH HIM A LESSON!

NO! LEMME GO!

PLEASE...

RNN...

LEAVE HIM ALONE...

RGH...

CLARKIE? ARE YOU...

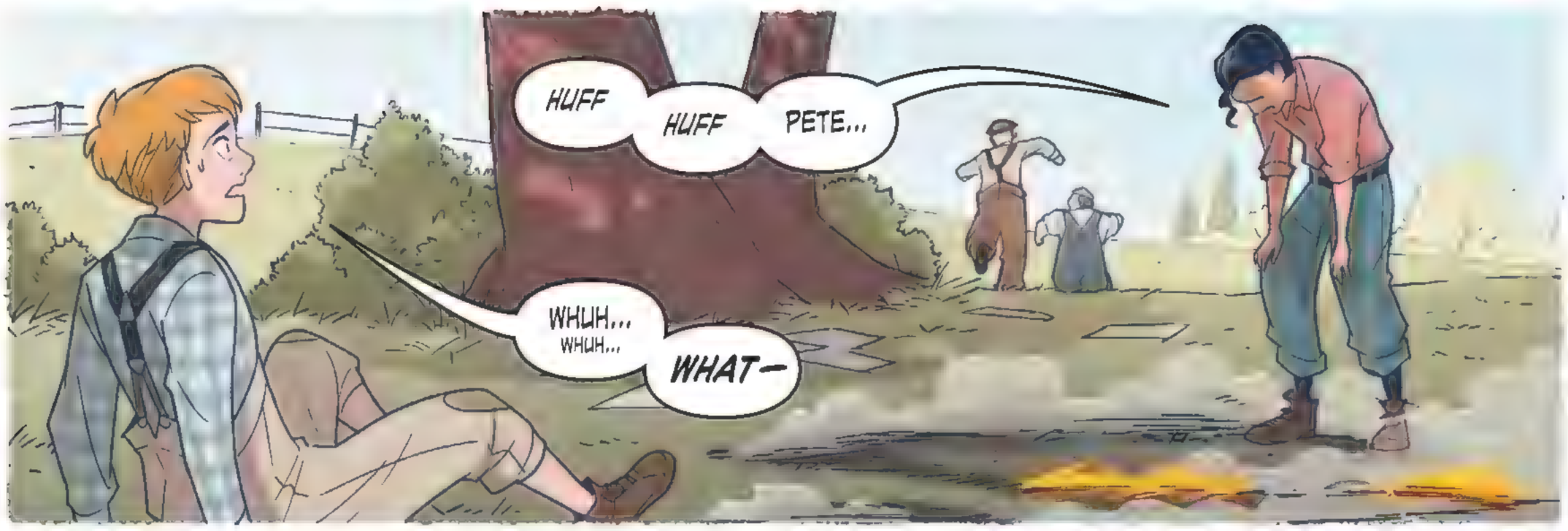
FLYING?

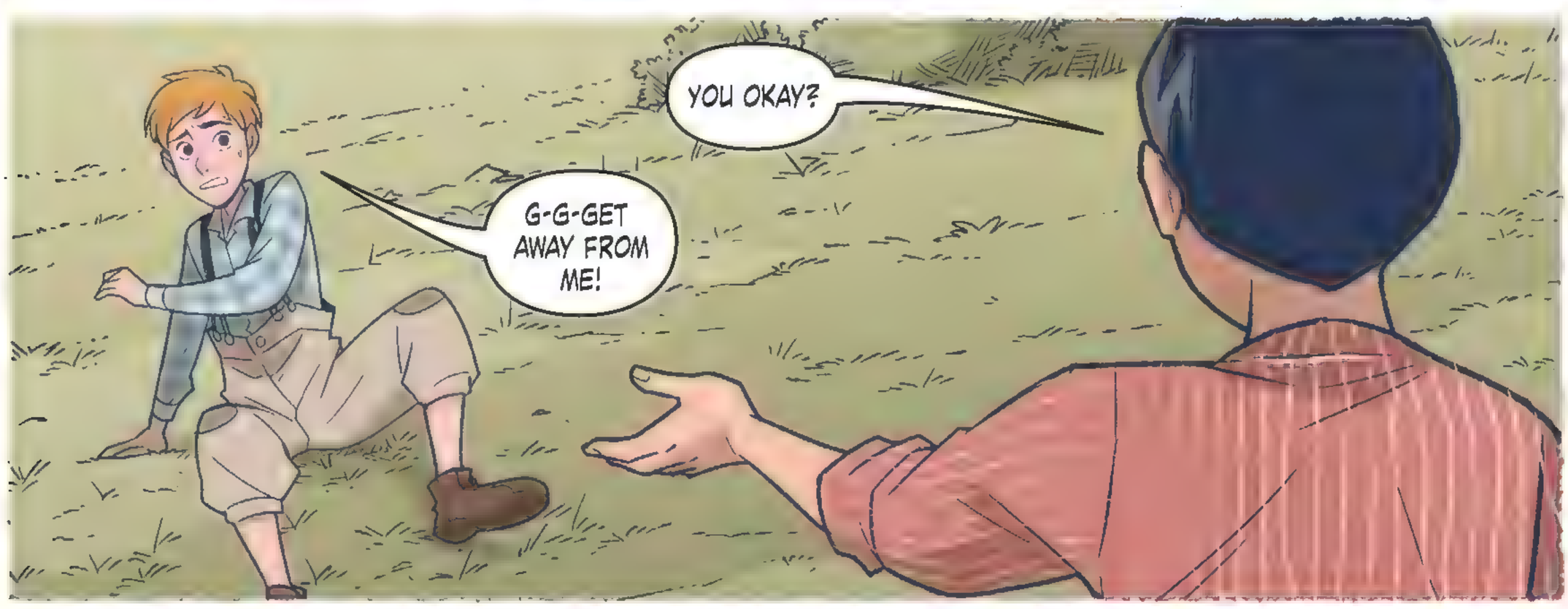
I SAID...

RFF...

LEAVE HIM ALONE!

AAAH!


HUFF
HUFF
PETE...
WHUH...
WHUH...
WHAT—


YOU OKAY?
G-G-GET AWAY FROM ME!

I, TOO, ALWAYS SUSPECTED THAT I DIDN'T BELONG.

THAT DAY, I GOT PROOF.
OLDEN TALES
Oriental

I WANTED TO SPEND THE DAY AT HOME, BUT TOMMY INSISTED WE VISIT THE *UNITY HOUSE.*

THE UNITY HOUSE OF METROPOLIS

WE READ ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED IN THE MORNING EDITION!

IT'S JUST TERRIBLE, TOMMY! DID THEY HURT YOU?

NAH. THEY JUST SHOOK US UP A LITTLE.

THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS INVADES METROPOLIS

ACTUALLY, WHEN WE FIRST SAW THEM THROUGH THE WINDOW, MY MOM THOUGHT THEY WERE GHOSTS!

AND I SAID, "COME ON, MOM! METROPOLIS DOESN'T CELEBRATE HALLOWEEN *THAT* EARLY!"

THEN THEY LIT THAT *FIRE!* BUT BELIEVE ME, *THESE WONTONS* DON'T FRY UP *THAT* EASY!

HA HA HA!

YOU'RE HILARIOUS, TOMMY!

DID HE REALLY JUST CALL US *WONTONS?*

THE CREEPS UNDERNEATH THOSE HOODS COULD HAVE BEEN *ANYONE.* THEY COULD HAVE BEEN FROM THESE KIDS' FAMILIES.

HECK, THEY COULD HAVE BEEN THESE KIDS *THEMSELVES.*

BUT TOMMY'S TOO IMPRESSED BY HIS OWN JOKES TO EVEN THINK ABOUT THAT.

CHUCK RIGGS. WAKE UP.

I'VE JUST BEEN INFORMED BY ONE OF OUR LOYAL KNIGHTS THAT THE LEES HAVE CHOSEN TO *IGNORE* OUR WARNING.

I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER IF YOUR *INCOMPETENCE* LAST NIGHT HAD ANY INFLUENCE ON THEIR DECISION.

I KNOW I DISAPPOINTED YOU, UNCLE MATT... *I'M SORRY.*

THEN YOU ARE *FORGIVEN,* YOUNG MAN. IT TAKES TIME AND EFFORT TO BUILD *CHARACTER.*

EVERY ONE OF US MAKES *MISTAKES.* WHY, I BET EVEN YOUR *HERO* HAS MADE HIS SHARE.

SUPERMAN? *NAH.*

I *KNOW* YOU WON'T LET ME DOWN AGAIN.

UNCLE MATT? I WAS THINKING, MAYBE IT WAS ENOUGH TO SCARE THEM A LITTLE—

OH, DON'T YOU WORRY ABOUT THE LEES. THE *KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS* IS AN OLD AND VENERABLE ORGANIZATION.

CROSS-BURNING ISN'T OUR ONLY *RITUAL* TO TAKE CARE OF *VERMIN.*

THOSE UNITY HOUSE KIDS ARE PRETTY GREAT, AREN'T THEY?

I GUESS.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH *YOU?*

I DON'T KNOW...

I MISS CHINATOWN.

A WORD OF ADVICE, SIS? YOU'LL NEVER BE HAPPY IN ***METROPOLIS*** IF YOU KEEP PINING AFTER ***CHINATOWN.***

PSH. AT LEAST ***THERE,*** YOU WEREN'T ***SO FAKE.***

WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!

"THESE WONTONS DON'T FRY UP *THAT* EASY!"

ANYTHING TO FIT IN, RIGHT, TOMMY?!

YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS?!

I'M SURE YOU ***CAN'T WAIT*** TO TELL ME!

YOU'RE ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT HOW YOU *DON'T* FIT IN!

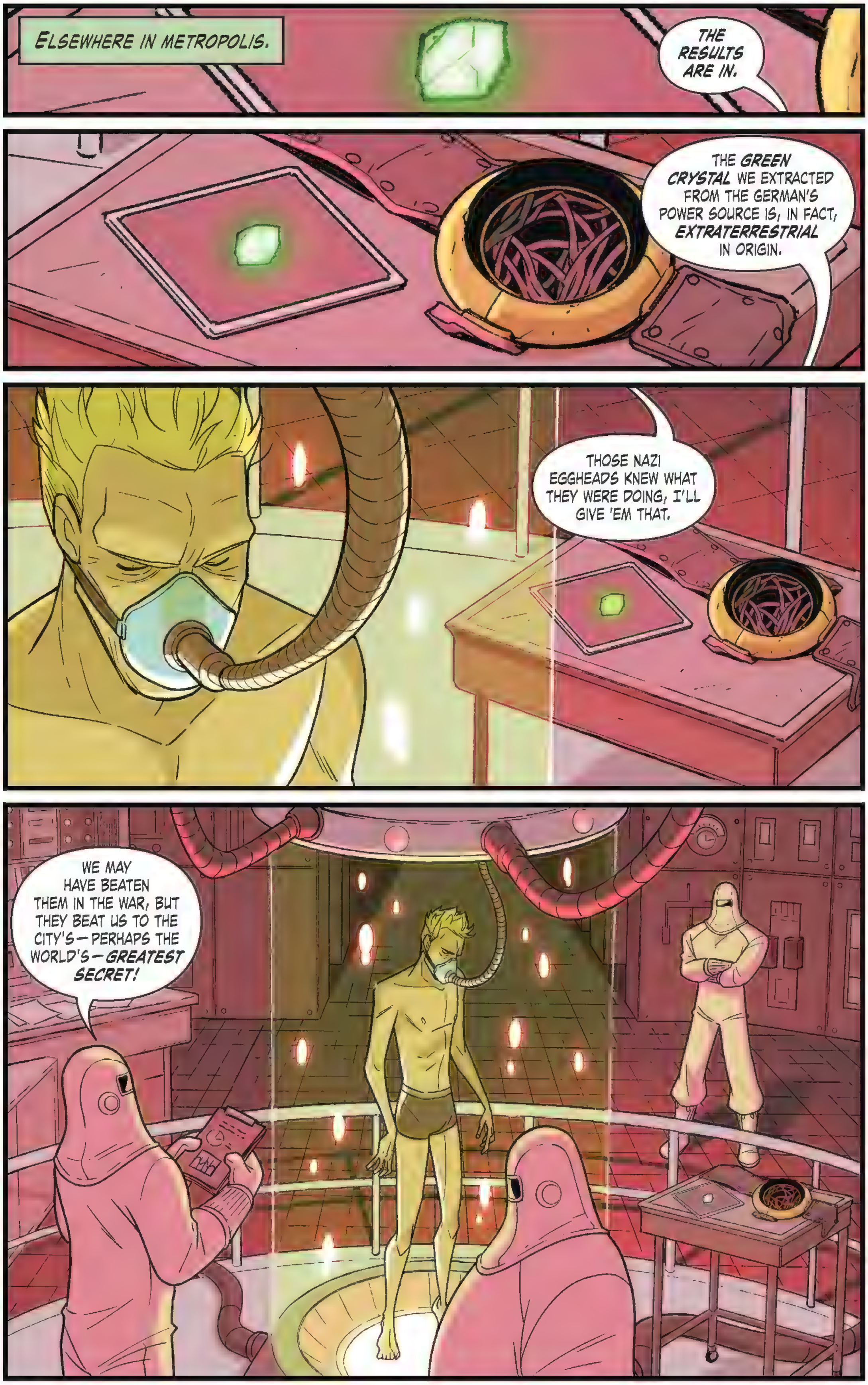
MAYBE IF YOU WEREN'T SO *STUCK UP* ABOUT BEING DIFFERENT, YOU'D START MAKING FRIENDS HERE, TOO!

OH, DON'T YOU START *CRYING* ON ME!

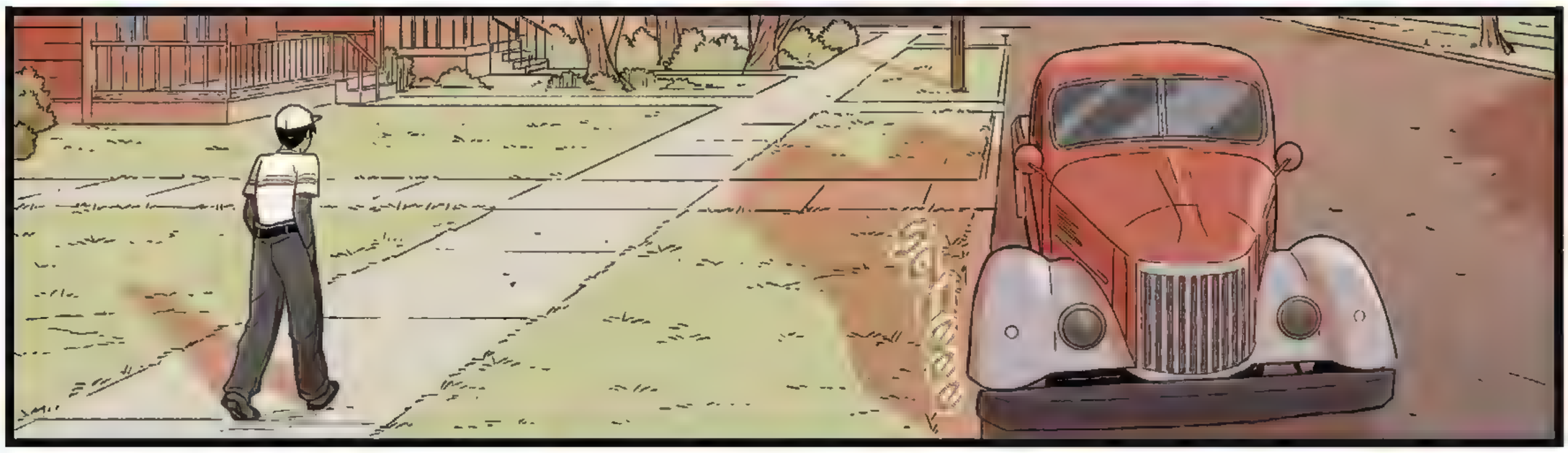
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO STARTED IT, CALLING ME *FAKE!*

GO AHEAD AND WALK HOME BY YOURSELF!

SEE IF I CARE!

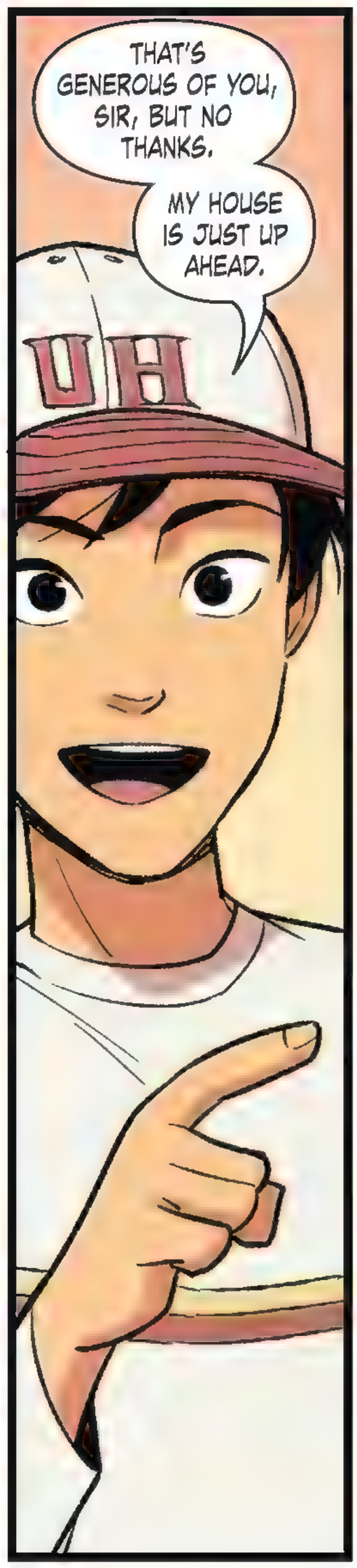

ELSEWHERE IN METROPOLIS.
THE RESULTS ARE IN.
THE GREEN CRYSTAL WE EXTRACTED FROM THE GERMAN'S POWER SOURCE IS, IN FACT, EXTRATERRESTRIAL IN ORIGIN.
THOSE NAZI EGGHEADS KNEW WHAT THEY WERE DOING, I'LL GIVE 'EM THAT.
WE MAY HAVE BEATEN THEM IN THE WAR, BUT THEY BEAT US TO THE CITY'S—PERHAPS THE WORLD'S—GREATEST SECRET!

CALL ME FAKE, WILL YA...
GRUMBLE GRUMBLE



YOUNG MAN.

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE A *LONG WAY* FROM WHERE YOU BELONG. CAN WE GIVE YOU A RIDE?


THAT'S GENEROUS OF YOU, SIR, BUT NO THANKS.
MY HOUSE IS JUST UP AHEAD.
UH

A *CHING-CHONG* LIVING IN A NEIGHBORHOOD LIKE *THIS?*

YOU DON'T SAY.

!

TOMMY SHOULD'VE BEEN HOME AN HOUR AGO. HE DOESN'T WALK *THAT* SLOW.

MY STOMACH TIGHTENS UP LIKE I'M ABOUT TO GO ON A REALLY, REALLY *BUMPY RIDE.*

I TELL MYSELF TO IGNORE IT. TOMMY AND I HAD JUST GOTTEN INTO A FIGHT, RIGHT? *OF COURSE* I'D BE FEELING BAD.

HE'LL WALK THROUGH THAT DOOR AT ANY MOMENT.

BUT I DON'T BELIEVE ME.

TOMMY?

TOMMY!

TOMMY LEE!

GASP!

OFFICER!
OFFICER!

YOU GOTTA HELP ME!

MY BROTHER, *TOMMY LEE*—I THINK SOMETHING *TERRIBLE* HAPPENED TO HIM!

OH, I DOUBT THAT, LITTLE GIRL.

THIS CITY IS *VERY, VERY SAFE,* ESPECIALLY FOR PEOPLE LIKE YOU.

METROPOLIS GOES OUT OF ITS WAY FOR YOU, GIVING YOU *HOUSES* AND *JOBS* AND *PROMOTIONS* YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE TO *EARN*—

—ALL BECAUSE IT WANTS TO BE THE BLASTED *LEAGUE OF NATIONS* OR SOMETHING.

THE DAILY PLANET.

DING!

JIMMY! ARE YOU HERE?!

CAN I SEE JIMMY OLSEN, PLEASE?!

ROBERTA?!

TOMMY DIDN'T COME HOME, JIMMY! I WENT TO LOOK FOR HIM AND FOUND THIS ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD!

HE *LOVES* THIS BASEBALL CAP! HE WOULD NEVER JUST LEAVE IT LIKE THAT!

AW, JEEZ...!

I WANT TO KNOW WHERE *CHUCK RIGGS* LIVES!

NOW, WAIT A MINUTE...I KNOW HE'S A *SOREHEAD* AND ALL, BUT YOU DON'T THINK—

TAKE ME TO HIM! *PLEASE!*

MY SCOOTER'S PARKED IN THE BACK!

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST—! OLSEN! WHAT'D I TELL YOU ABOUT RUNNING IN MY OFFICE?!

SORRY, CHIEF! WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN!

AND WHAT'D I TELL YOU ABOUT CALLING ME *CHIEF*?!

THAT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN EITHER, CHIEF— I MEAN, *MR. WHITE!*

KENT! THAT GIRL WITH OLSEN...ISN'T SHE ONE OF THE LEES, FROM THE FRONT PAGE THIS MORNING?

I BELIEVE THAT WAS *ROBERTA LEE*, DR. LEE'S DAUGHTER.

WELL, WHAT AM I PAYING YOU FOR, KENT?! *GO FIGURE OUT WHAT THEIR STORY IS!*

RIGHT AWAY, CHIEF!

WHAT'D I *JUST* SAY ABOUT CALLING ME CHIEF?!

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?!

THIS'LL BE QUITE THE ***HONOR*** FOR YOU, BOY. YOU'RE ABOUT TO TAKE PART IN AN ***OLD KLAN RITUAL.***

FIRST, WE'LL POUR ***HOT, STICKY TAR*** ON YOU.

SOME FOLKS DIE FROM THE ***BURNS,*** BUT YOU'RE YOUNG AND STURDY. I EXPECT YOU'LL ***SURVIVE.***

THEN WE'LL ROLL YOU AROUND IN A ***PILE OF FEATHERS,*** AND THE TAR WILL ***GLUE*** THE FEATHERS TO YOUR SKIN. AFTER THAT, YOU'RE FREE TO GO.

BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE YOUR FAMILY WANTING TO STAY IN OUR CITY AFTER THEY SEE YOU MADE UP LIKE A ***CHICKEN!*** HA HA!

BEFORE WE GET STARTED, THOUGH, I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT WE DON'T ***HATE*** YOUR KIND.

DON'T YOU BELIEVE THE PAPERS. THERE'S NOT AN ***OUNCE OF HATE*** IN OUR HEARTS.

YOU PEOPLE HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO LIVE HOW YOU WANT IN YOUR OWN COUNTRY, BUT I WILL ***NOT*** PERMIT YOU TO BRING YOUR FILTH INTO ***MY COUNTRY,*** UNDERSTAND?

IT'S JUST... I'VE SEEN ***PHOTOS*** OF CHINATOWN. CROWDED, RUN-DOWN, DRUG ADDICTS ON EVERY CORNER... AND MY GOD, ***THE FILTH!***

IT'S ***NOT*** LIKE THAT!

WHAM!

GFK!

SCREEEECH!

OW

OW

OW

WHUMP

OW

WHY THAT LITTLE—

HE COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN FAR!

THERE, GRAND SCORPION!

HUFF
HUFF
LEAVE ME ALONE!
DID YOU HURT YOUR ARM, ALIEN? COME OVER HERE AND LET ME TAKE A LOOK.
BLASTED—!
NO! I—!
SPLASH!
GLRGL-
HA! WITH HIS ARM ALL BUSTED UP, THAT CHING-CHONG'S AS GOOD AS FINISHED!
YES, HE IS. LET'S HEAD BACK.

LOIS LANE SAID EXPOSING *SECRETS* IS HER BUSINESS.

POUND! POUND!

IT HAS TO BE *MY* BUSINESS NOW, TOO.

CHINA GIRL...?

MY NAME IS *ROBERTA!*

TOMMY WENT *MISSING!* TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW!

WHAT?! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK—

I *KNOW* YOU WERE AT OUR HOUSE LAST NIGHT!

I *KNOW* YOU WERE THE ONE WHO THREW THE BOMB!

Y-YOU'RE CRAZY!

YOU SHOULD'VE TAKEN OFF YOUR *RED BOOTS* BEFORE PUTTING ON THAT ROBE, CHUCK.

GET OFF MY PROPERTY!

COME ON, CHUCK! THIS IS *SERIOUS!*

YOU TWO THINK YOU CAN JUST MARCH UP TO *MY HOUSE* AND LEVEL *FALSE ACCUSATIONS* AT ME?

PUT THE BAT DOWN, YOU LUNATIC!

YOU GOT ANOTHER THING COMIN'!

GET OFF MY PROPERTY!

KRACK!

NOT UNTIL YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BROTHER!

I'M WARNING YOU!

KRACK!

NO... I DIDN'T MEAN TO ACTUALLY HIT—

SUPERMAN?!

HIYA, SUPERMAN!

HE'S EVEN BIGGER UP CLOSE.

SUPERMAN! I *SWEAR* I DIDN'T MEAN TO—

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT...?

BETTER THAN YOUR BAT, KID. YOU COULD'VE REALLY HURT SOMEONE!

TELL ME YOUR NAME.

CHUCK RIGGS.

W-WOULD YOU BELIEVE I'M YOUR *BIGGEST FAN?*

SO *THAT'S* WHY YOU WEAR THOSE RED BOOTS!

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME *EAVESDROPPING,* CHUCK.

BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THAT, IF YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP ANOTHER PERSON, YOU OUGHT TO AT LEAST *TRY.*

...

I...

I KNOW WHERE THE ***KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS*** DOES ITS RITUALS. I CAN SHOW YOU.

MAYBE THEY TOOK TOMMY THERE?

LET'S GO! WE'RE TALKING ABOUT MY BROTHER'S ***LIFE*** HERE!

I CAN TAKE YOU, BUT I'LL HAVE TO CARRY ONE OF YOU UNDER EACH ARM. IT'LL BE ***AWKWARD.***

YOU KNOW THAT LITTLE WOODEN BRIDGE JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY? WE SHOULD HEAD THAT WAY.

JIMMY, CAN YOU GO TELL INSPECTOR HENDERSON WHAT WE'RE UP TO?

YOU BET, SUPERMAN!

YOU TWO READY?

YEAH.

READY.

I'M ***ROBERTA LEE,*** BY THE WAY. TOMMY'S SISTER.

HANG TIGHT, ROBERTA.

"LET'S GO FIND YOUR BROTHER."

YOU KNOW HOW I TOLD SUPERMAN THAT I WAS *READY?*

COMPLETE LIE.

I THINK I'M GOING TO BE *SICK.*

ALIEN TALES

CHAPTER 2

THERE, SUPERMAN! OVER THAT RIVER! THAT'S WHERE THE MEETING WAS!

THE MEETING OF *BIGOTS IN BEDSHEETS*, CHUCK?

=GASP=

NHH...

HEY, I'M ALREADY TRYING TO *HELP!* YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE SO *DISRESPECTFUL* OF—

KIDS, LET'S STAY FOCUSED ON FINDING *TOMMY!*

HANG TIGHT!

UH, SUPERMAN? PLEASE DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GONNA—

HA HA!

—JUMP OVER THAT RIVER!

LEAP!

BEST MOMENT OF MY WHOLE LIFE!

UGH...

BLARF...

ROBERTA, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

GURGLY STOMACH. I'LL BE FINE.

NOBODY'S HERE. I THOUGHT FOR *SURE*...

LOOK! THESE TIRE TRACKS ARE *FRESH!*

WHOEVER MADE THEM MIGHT STILL BE AROUND!

I LISTEN FOR A CAR ENGINE, FOOTSTEPS, VOICES...

NOTHING.

DON'T JUST LISTEN.

LOOK.

YOU TWO!

UH...WHAT'D YOU JUST SAY, SUPERMAN?

ROBERTA, CHUCK, DO EITHER OF YOU HAPPEN TO SEE...

TOMMY?! YOU SEE TOMMY SOMEWHERE?

NO, NO.

WHERE?!

HOW CAN THIS BE? I'M **AWAKE** NOW!

LOOK.

LOOK *THROUGH.*

HOW—?!

FOR JUST A MOMENT, THE ROCKS, THE BUSHES, EVEN THE GROUND I'M STANDING ON—

—ALL LOOK AS IF THEY'RE MADE OF **GLASS.**

HE'S IN THE RIVER!

SEEING THROUGH ROCKS—

—I SHOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DO THAT.

TOMMY!

OH, THANK GOD!

TOMMY...?

SAY SOMETHING!

COUGH! COUGH!

HOW COME YOUR BREATH...

SMELLS LIKE BARF...?

DUMMY. I'M SO HAPPY YOU'RE ALIVE I'M GONNA LET THAT ONE GO.

OW! MY ARM!

CAREFUL, ROBERTA! IT MIGHT BE BROKEN!

YOU CAN KNOW FOR SURE. TAKE A LOOK AT HIS BONE.

LOOK THROUGH.

WHOA... SUPERMAN'S HERE?!

THEY'RE STILL HERE.

MINDING YOURSELF TOO MUCH IS A GOOD WAY TO LOSE YOUR MIND, CLARK.

STAY FOCUSED ON TOMMY.

TOMMY, WHEN YOU TRY TO MOVE IT, DOES IT FEEL LIKE THE WORST PAIN EVER?

HNN... PRETTY MUCH...

I BET IT'S BROKEN. WE GOTTA GET THAT ARM IN A SLING. WE CAN USE MY SHIRT—

NO, LET'S USE MY CAPE.

SUPERMAN! LOOK WHO I BROUGHT WITH ME!

GOOD MAN, JIMMY!

INSPECTOR HENDERSON, I HAVE TO GET TOMMY TO THE HOSPITAL AS QUICK AS I CAN! CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF ROBERTA AND CHUCK?

YOU GOT IT, BIG GUY. NO—

—PROBLEM.

FWOOOSH

THIS CAR RIDE SEEMS TO BE OKAY. MAYBE I'M ALL OUT OF BARF FOR THE NIGHT.

PLUS, I KEEP THINKING BACK TO THAT LEAP WE TOOK OVER THE RIVER WITH SUPERMAN.

I PROBABLY WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED IF I'D HAD A STURDIER STOMACH, BUT THE WAY WE LANDED WAS JUST... ***WEIRD.***

I ***BARELY*** FELT IT WHEN SUPERMAN'S FEET TOUCHED THE GROUND, LIKE THE ***LAWS OF GRAVITY*** DIDN'T APPLY TO HIM.

YOU GOTTA DO ***WHAT'S RIGHT,*** CHUCK! TELL US EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TONIGHT!

I TOLD YOU ALREADY, I DON'T KNOW ***NOTHIN',*** JIMMY!

SORRY YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO WRITE A FANCY STORY ABOUT IT FOR THE *PLANET!*

YOU KNOW THIS ISN'T ABOUT ***THAT!***

BECAUSE IT'S ABOUT MY ***FAMILY! SPILL,*** CHUCK!

AHEM.

KIDS, LISTEN. THE THREE OF YOU HAVE HAD A PRETTY ***ROUGH NIGHT.***

HOW ABOUT WE GIVE EACH OTHER SOME SPACE?

AND, YOUNG MAN... *CHUCK.* FROM WHAT I SAW, SUPERMAN COULDN'T HAVE SAVED YOUR FRIEND WITHOUT YOU. IS THAT RIGHT?

TOMMY ISN'T HIS *FRIEND!*

BUT IT'S *TRUE.* IF CHUCK HADN'T TAKEN US TO THAT SPOT, TOMMY MIGHT NOT HAVE MADE IT.

SEEMS TO ME YOU'VE ALREADY DONE *WHAT'S RIGHT.*

I'LL TELL YOU WHAT. AFTER I DROP ROBERTA OFF AT THE HOSPITAL, I'LL TAKE YOU BACK TO YOUR HOME. YOU GET A GOOD NIGHT'S REST.

I'LL COME BY IN THE MORNING AND WE CAN HAVE A *CHAT.*

OKAY BY YOU?

YEAH.

I MEAN, YES.

YES, SIR.

METROPOLIS HOSPITAL.

YOU THINK WE BROKE THE ***SOUND BARRIER*** COMING OVER HERE, SUPERMAN? IT FELT LIKE WE BROKE THE SOUND BARRIER!

HA HA. I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT.

HOW ABOUT WE TEND TO THAT ARM OF YOURS, YOUNG MAN? TELL ME YOUR NAME?

MY NAME'S ***TOMMY LEE,*** DOCTOR!

AND I JUST BROKE THE ***SOUND BARRIER!***

THAT'S VERY NICE. NOW, HOW DO WE GET AHOLD OF YOUR PARENTS?

*THAT **GREEN CRYSTAL SMELL** AGAIN.*

SNIFF SNIFF

SIGH.

THEY'VE CHANGED OUTFITS.

SPECTACULAR JOB SAVING THAT BOY!

WE'RE SO PROUD!

TELL ME THE TRUTH. ARE YOU SOME SORT OF TRICK BY LUTHOR? OR DER TEUFEL?

OH, WE'RE NO TRICK.

THEN WHAT ARE YOU?

COME, NOW. HAVEN'T YOU FIGURED IT OUT?

WE'RE YOUR PARENTS.

BEFORE WE SENT YOU HERE, WE THEORIZED THAT THIS PLANET'S YELLOW SUN WOULD GIVE YOU POWERS BEYOND IMAGINING.

IT SEEMS WE WERE CORRECT.

NO. WHAT YOU'RE SAYING CAN'T BE TRUE!

I—I DON'T LOOK A THING LIKE YOU!

THOUGH YOU WERE IGNORANT OF THEIR SOURCE, YOU'VE ALWAYS KNOWN THAT YOU HAVE POWERS.

YOU ARE OBVIOUSLY STRONGER AND FASTER THAN THEY.

BUT THEN, WHY ARE YOU WILLING TO USE SOME OF YOUR POWERS, BUT NOT OTHERS?

AND JUST LIKE THAT—

*MORE **MEMORIES** COME RUSHING BACK.*

SMALLVILLE. 1926.

THAT BOY IS ***DEMON POSSESSED,*** I TELL YOU!

HOW ***ELSE*** DO YOU EXPLAIN WHAT MY BOYS SAW?!

H-HE FLOATED UP IN THE—

THE BIBLE CALLS IT *LEVITATION.*

HE LEVITATIONED UP IN THE AIR!

AND THE *FIRES OF HELL* SHOT OUT FROM HIS EYES!

PLEASE, MRS. BRAVERMAN, CALM DOWN. I'M SURE WE CAN—

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO *CALM DOWN* WHEN THERE'S A VERITABLE *DEMON* HERE IN OUR MIDST?!

IT AND ITS HOST MUST BE *EXORCISED* FROM SMALLVILLE!

EVENING, FOLKS.

ABOUT TIME YOU SHOWED UP, SHERIFF!

THE KENT BOY IS POSSESSED BY A *DEMON!* EARLIER TODAY, KENNY AND KYLE SAW HIM PERFORM ALL MANNER OF *SUPERNATURAL DEVILRY!*

SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE CALLED ON PASTOR LEONE INSTEAD?

THAT LOUT IS ALWAYS TRYING TO AVOID ME!

YOU DON'T SAY.

I CAN TAKE IT FROM HERE, MRS. BRAVERMAN. HOW ABOUT YOU ALL HEAD HOME?

GOOD THINKING, SHERIFF!

NEVER KNOW WHEN A POSSESSED BOY MIGHT GET A HANKERING FOR *HUMAN FLESH!*

CLARK KENT.

STEP FORWARD, PLEASE.

=SNIFF SNIFF=

HM. *NOT* A HINT OF *BRIMSTONE.*

HOW ABOUT YOU PERFORM A BIT OF THAT *SUPERNATURAL DEVILRY* FOR ME, SON?

I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT I—

NOW WAIT ONE MINUTE! ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT YOU ARE ENTIRELY INCAPABLE OF *SUPERNATURAL DEVILRY?!*

WELL, THEN, I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS BOY IS *NOT* POSSESSED BY A DEMON!

THANK YOU, SHERIFF.

I'VE KNOWN CLARK PRETTY MUCH ALL HIS LIFE, MARTHA. HE'S ALWAYS LOOKING TO HELP, NEVER ANY TROUBLE.

IF THAT BOY'S GOT A DEMON IN HIM, IT'S JUST ABOUT THE *LOUSIEST DEMON* IN ALL CREATION.

WE APPRECIATE IT, TRULY.

HEY, THIS IS *SMALLVILLE.* WE LOOK AFTER *OUR OWN.*

THAT INCLUDES YOU FOLKS, OF COURSE. AND, FOR BETTER OR WORSE, THAT INCLUDES THE BRAVERMANS, TOO.

I'LL GO SEE IF I CAN TALK SOME SENSE INTO 'EM.

LATER THAT NIGHT...

MA... CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

WHAT IF THE BRAVERMANS ARE RIGHT? I MEAN, I ACTUALLY *DID* LEVITATE, AND...AND...

CLARK. PLEASE.

"WOE UNTO THEM THAT CALL EVIL GOOD, AND GOOD EVIL."

YOU OUGHT TO WORRY LESS ABOUT *YOU* AND MORE ABOUT THOSE POOR *BRAVERMAN BOYS.* SEEMS TO ME THEY'VE GOT A LIFETIME OF WOE AHEAD OF THEM.

BUT HOW ELSE DO YOU EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT I DID? MA...

WHAT AM I?

YOU ARE OUR *SON,* CLARK KENT. THAT'S ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW.

FOR NOW, AT LEAST.

NOW GET SOME SLEEP.

*BUT THAT **WASN'T** ALL I NEEDED TO KNOW.*

I SNUCK INTO PA'S WORK SHED FOR A CLOSER LOOK AT THE ONLY CLUE I HAD.

IF I COULD HEAR THOSE **WEIRD VOICES** AGAIN, I THOUGHT, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE SENSE OF THEM.

I MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE SENSE OF **ME.**

BUT I COULDN'T GET THE THING TO TURN ON.

I DECIDED TO BRING IT TO PA. SURE, IT WAS LATE, BUT HE'D NEVER BEEN ONE TO TURN AWAY MY **CURIOSITY.**

I COULD HEAR THEM THROUGH THE WINDOW.

MUCH AS I HATE TO ADMIT IT, YOU WERE ***RIGHT,*** JONATHAN. IT'S TIME TO TELL HIM WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT... YOU KNOW. ***THE TRUTH.***

NO, MARTHA. I WAS ***WRONG.*** WE'VE ALREADY TOLD HIM ***TOO MUCH.***

I *NEVER* SHOULD'VE SHOWN HIM THAT BOX WITH THE VOICES! WHAT IF *THAT'S* WHAT TRIGGERED ALL THIS *STRANGE BEHAVIOR?*

BUT THOSE AWFUL PEOPLE PUT IT IN HIS HEAD THAT HE MIGHT BE *DEMON POSSESSED!*

WE HAVE TO SHOW HIM THAT HE'S *NOT!* THAT HE'S—

WHAT, MARTHA? SAY IT.

AN ALIEN?

I WOULD *NEVER* USE THAT WORD FOR OUR CLARK!

THERE ARE FOLKS OUT THERE MUCH MORE *DANGEROUS* THAN THE BRAVERMANS. IF *THEY* WERE TO DISCOVER THAT OUR SON IS AN—

THAT HE'S *EXTRAORDINARY,* THEY MIGHT TAKE HIM AWAY. OR *WORSE.*

I REFUSE TO LET THAT HAPPEN.

FROM NOW ON, CLARK MUST BE ORDINARY. NO MORE *INCIDENTS.* NO MORE *UNWANTED ATTENTION.*

WE'LL RAISE HIM TO BE THE MOST *PERFECTLY ORDINARY* BOY IN ALL OF SMALLVILLE.

AGREED?

...

AGREED.

Click.

GASP!

NO NO NO!

SHUT UP SHUT UP SHUT UP!

CLARK...?

IS THAT YOU?

WOOSH!

NO NO NO!

SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

SHUT UP!

TOSS

KRKL

SPLASH

HUFF

HUFF

PLEASE...

HUFF

LET ME BE ORDINARY.

PERFECTLY ORDINARY.

PERFECT.

THE NEXT MORNING, WE SAT DOWN FOR BREAKFAST, JUST LIKE ALWAYS.

WE SMILED AND ATE AND TALKED ABOUT THE DAY AHEAD.

NO ONE BROUGHT UP THE NIGHT BEFORE.

WHY, SON? WHY SOME POWERS, BUT NOT *OTHERS?*

IT'S AS IF YOU ONLY WANT TO BE *HALF* OF WHO YOU *ACTUALLY ARE.*

HOW ABOUT YOU SIGN IT, "TO MY DEAREST TOMMY, THE SMARTEST PERSON IN THE LEE FAMILY!"

NOPE.

TOMMY! ROBERTA, YOU'RE HERE, TOO! OH, THANK GOODNESS!

AFTER THE LAST NIGHT, YOUR FATHER AND I FEARED THE WORST!

WHERE WERE YOU CHILDREN?! HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?!

DOES IT HURT?

EH. A LITTLE, BUT *TOTALLY* WORTH IT! YOU SEE, SUPERMAN—

SUPERMAN DID THIS?!

I KNEW HIS *"GOOD CITIZEN" ACT* WOULDN'T LAST! A BEING THAT *POWERFUL* COULD NEVER—

DAD, YOU'VE GOT IT ALL WRONG! SUPERMAN DIDN'T *HURT* TOMMY—HE *SAVED* HIS LIFE!

WITH ROBERTA'S HELP.

THANKS, SIS.

...

YOU WOULD'VE DONE THE SAME FOR ME.

YEAH. I WOULD'VE.

BUT THEN *WHO* HURT YOU, SON?! WAS IT THOSE *TERRIBLE MEN IN HOODS?*

UH, WELL...

NAH! I WAS, UH, GOOFING AROUND BY THE RIVER AND SORT OF *FELL IN!* LIKE A DUMMY! *HA HA!*

WHY WOULD HE LIE ABOUT THE *KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS?!*

?!

UM...*YUP!* HE JUST FELL IN LIKE A *DUMMY!* HA HA! LIKE THE *BIGGEST DUMMY EVER!*

WELL, I WOULDN'T SAY THE *BIGGEST* EVER! HA HA! ACTUALLY, GIVEN THE LIGHTING, IT WAS ALL PRETTY UNDERSTANDABLE!

STILL, GOOD THING SUPERMAN HAPPENED BY!

BUT THE RIVER IS ***MILES AWAY*** FROM OUR HOME! WHY WOULD YOU BE ANYWHERE ***NEAR—***

H-HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT? WE SHOULD PROBABLY GIVE SUPERMAN HIS CAPE BACK!

HE'S STILL HERE?!

SURE. I CAN SEE HIM FROM THE WINDOW.

BUT HOW IS THIS HAPPENING? ARE YOU GHOSTS? SOME SORT OF ***PROJECTION?***

EXCUSE ME, SUPERMAN?

ROBERTA!

I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING, AM I?

NO, NO! JUST...ENJOYING THE NIGHT AIR! HOW'S TOMMY?

HE'S PRETTY EXCITED ABOUT BRAGGING TO THE UNITY HOUSE THAT HE MET YOU.

IN OTHER WORDS, HE'S ***FINE.***

MR. SUPERMAN?

IS SUPERMAN TALKING TO HIMSELF?

THANK YOU, MR. SUPERMAN! OUR SON IS ALIVE AND SAFE! *THANK YOU! THANK YOU!*

MRS. AND DR. LEE, I PRESUME?

YOUR CHILDREN ARE SO *COURAGEOUS!* YOU MUST BE *PROUD!*

MY WIFE AND I TRULY ARE *GRATEFUL* TO YOU, SUPERMAN.

...

HERE'S YOUR CAPE BACK.

CAN I LET YOU IN ON A *SECRET,* ROBERTA? CRIME-FIGHTING CAN BE PRETTY ROUGH ON CAPES, SO MY MOTHER MADE ME A WHOLE *CLOSETFUL* OF THESE.

I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP THIS ONE.

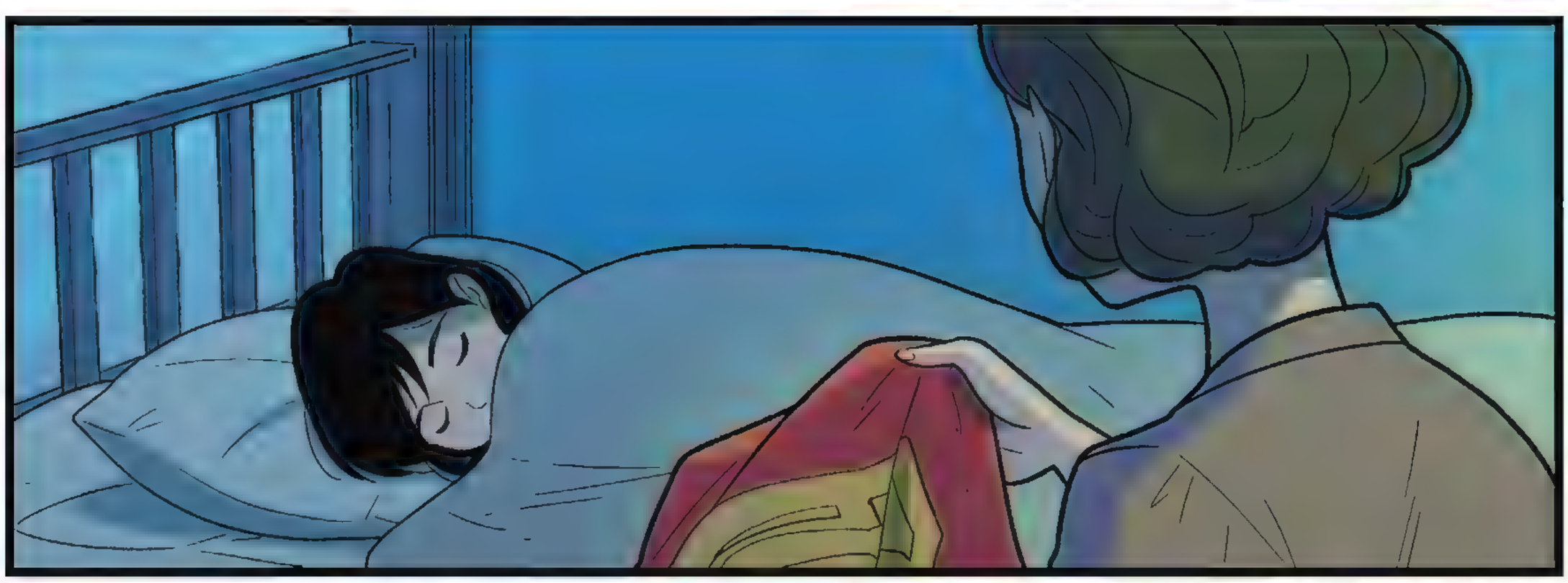
WHAT?! REALLY?!

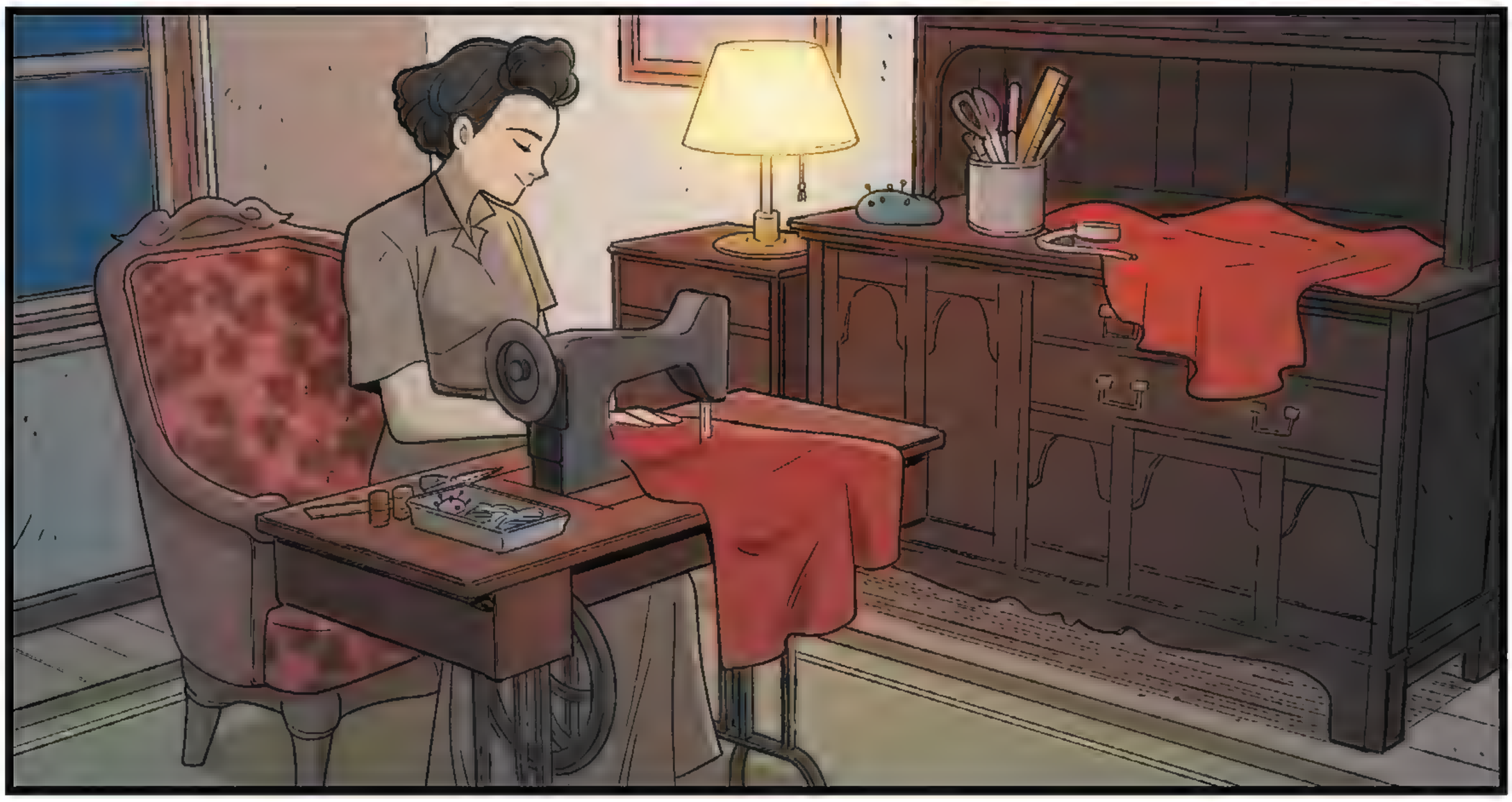
IS TOMMY RIGHT?

IS EVERYTHING WE'VE GONE THROUGH IN METROPOLIS WORTH IT FOR *THIS ONE MOMENT?*

AFTER ALL, YOU'RE THE *REAL HERO* TONIGHT!

I THINK I'M GONNA HAVE TO SAY *YES.*





THE NEXT MORNING. THE DAILY PLANET.

PERRY?

YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?

IT'S YOUR STORY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT, KENT.

YOU NEED A REWRITE? I'D BE HAPPY TO—

THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M GETTING AT. IT'S ***TREMENDOUS.***

SO GOOD, IN FACT, I THOUGHT ***LOIS*** HAD WRITTEN IT.

UM... THANKS?

IT'S JUST... THE ***KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS*** KIDNAPPED A ***KID?***

HERE IN ***METROPOLIS?!***

GREAT CAESAR'S GHOST, IS THIS ***REALLY*** MY CITY?!

BUT THEY DIDN'T GET AWAY WITH IT, RIGHT? SUPERMAN—

THAT'S JUST IT. SUPERMAN DID SOMETHING.

AND SO SHOULD WE.

MY, MY.

Daily Planet

DAILY PLANET

$1000 REWARD FOR KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS

After second Klan attack, Daily Planet offers reward for information leading to arrest of Klan leader!

WITH A THOUSAND DOLLARS WE COULD GET OUT OF YOUR UNCLE'S HAIR AND RENT OUR OWN PLACE, CHUCK!

TELL ME, WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT *THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS?*

M-M-MOM?! W-W-WHY WOULD YOU—?!

HA HA! I'M JUST JOSHING YOU, SWEETIE!

BUT THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE SURE WAS!

TH-THAT'S *NOT FUNNY,* MOM!

DON'T GET ME WRONG. THOSE KLANSMEN ARE THE *WORST SORT* OF CRIMINALS! I HOPE THE POLICE OR SUPERMAN THROW 'EM BEHIND BARS FOREVER!

BUT IS IT REALLY ALL THAT BAD TO WANT TO LIVE AMONG *ONLY* YOUR OWN KIND?

I GOTTA RUN OR I'LL MISS THE BUS, SWEETIE!

YOUR UNCLE'S BEEN HOLED UP IN THE *GARAGE* ALL NIGHT!

TELL HIM TO TAKE A BREAK! HE PROBABLY DOESN'T EVEN KNOW IT'S DAYTIME YET!

UNCLE MATT! YOU SEE THIS?!
WHAT?
OH, HELL.
WHAT'S THIS YOU'RE WORKING ON?
UNCLE MATT... WHAT HAPPENED TO TOMMY LEE LAST NIGHT... THAT WASN'T *YOU*, RIGHT?
THAT MUST'VE BEEN SOME OF THE OTHER KNIGHTS.
RIGHT?
NOT NOW, CHUCK. WE HAVE VISITORS.
HOW'D THE COPS KNOW TO COME HERE?!
WELL...
MAYBE...
UM...

SOMEONE MUST'VE GIVEN ME UP FOR THAT BLASTED *DAILY PLANET* ***REWARD MONEY!***

YEAH... ***YEAH!*** THAT'S IT!

UNCLE MATT, YOU GOTTA GO! ***GET OUTTA TOWN!*** SNEAK OUT THE BACK, I'LL COVER FOR YOU!

HA! THERE'S MY ***GOOD AND LOYAL KNIGHT!***

A WORD OF ADVICE, CHUCK: STAY AWAY FROM THE ***UNITY HOUSE.***

AFTER ALL...

WE'RE AT WAR.

AND I DON'T WANT MY NEPHEW GETTING CAUGHT IN THE ***CROSSFIRE.***

YOU HEAR?

STAY AWAY.

TOMMYYY!

HEY, EVERYBODY! GUESS WHO I MET LAST NIGHT?

HIYA, LEES!

SUPERMAN! WE READ ALL ABOUT IT IN THE PAPER!

JEEZ. THAT'S YOUR PITCHING ARM, ISN'T IT?

AFRAID SO.

HEY, CAN I SIGN YOUR CAST?

DID SUPERMAN SMELL LIKE *COTTON CANDY CLOUDS?* BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT I'VE ALWAYS IMAGINED!

HUH. I CAN'T SAY HE DID.

OH, TOMMY!

HEY! WHO WROTE "YOU ARE OFTEN NOT A DUMMY"?

AW.

WITH EVERYTHING YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH, I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AREN'T HIDING AWAY SOMEWHERE!

MY GRANDPA USED TO SAY THAT CHINESE PEOPLE ARE *SNEAKY,* BUT MY DAD WOULD TELL HIM THAT YOU ALL ARE ACTUALLY *HARD-WORKING* AND *BRAVE!*

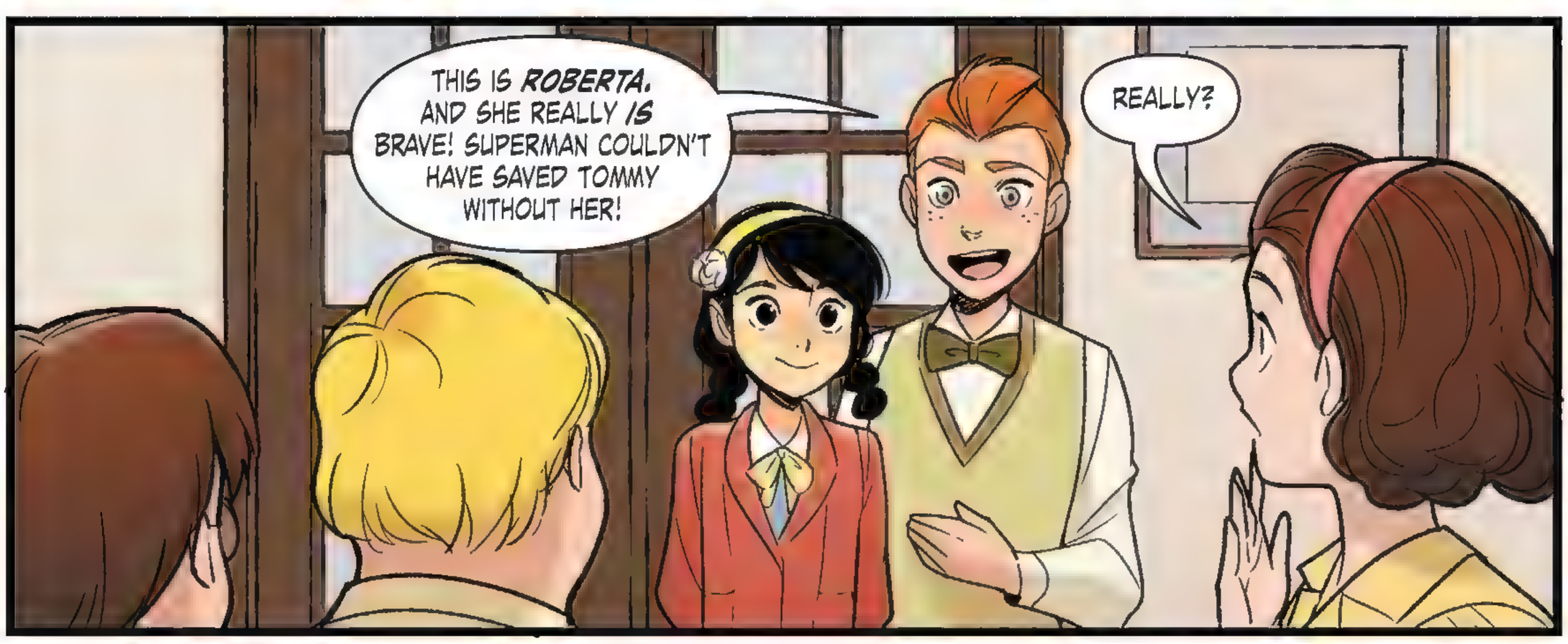
WELL, IT'S LIKE CONFUCIUS SAYS—

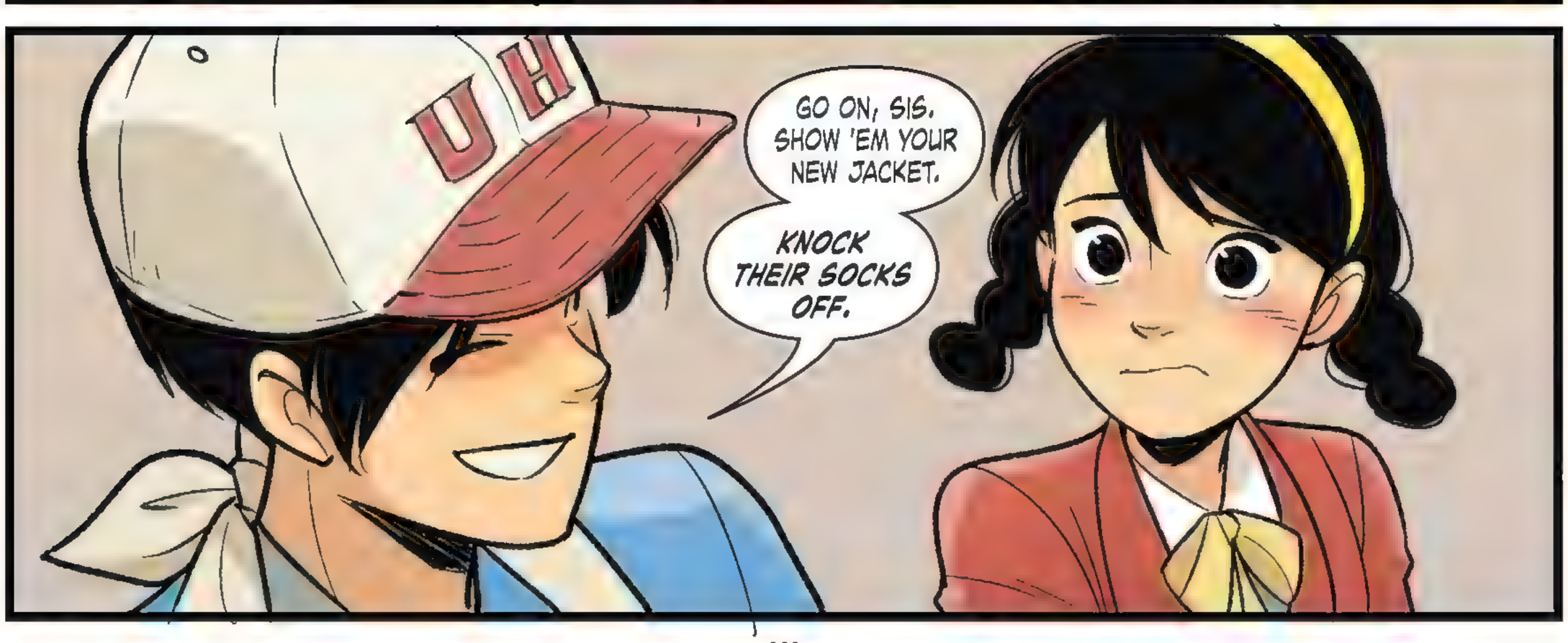
OBVIOUSLY, MY DAD'S *RIGHT!*

UGH. THERE HE GOES AGAIN. TOMMY'S NEVER READ CONFUCIUS IN ALL HIS LIFE!

WE'RE NOT ALL *BRAVE*, Y'KNOW. OR *SNEAKY*.
WE'RE NOT ALL *ANYTHING!*

THEY LOOK AT ME LIKE THEY'RE SEEING ME FOR THE FIRST TIME.
OH! HI...UH, REMIND ME YOUR NAME AGAIN?
YOU'RE TOMMY'S LITTLE SISTER, RIGHT?


THIS IS *ROBERTA*. AND SHE REALLY *IS* BRAVE! SUPERMAN COULDN'T HAVE SAVED TOMMY WITHOUT HER!
REALLY?


UH
GO ON, SIS. SHOW 'EM YOUR NEW JACKET.
KNOCK THEIR SOCKS OFF.

SUPERMAN GAVE ME HIS *CAPE.* OUR MOM MADE IT INTO THIS *JACKET.*

YOUR MOM SEWED THAT?!

IT'S *BEAUTIFUL!*

MIND IF I CHECK IF IT SMELLS LIKE *COTTON CANDY CLOUDS?*

NO WAY!

MY SOCKS ARE OFFICIALLY KNOCKED OFF!

DON'T BE WEIRD!

I THINK I'VE FIGURED OUT WHY TOMMY DIDN'T TELL OUR PARENTS ABOUT THE KLAN. DESPITE EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED, HE DOESN'T WANT TO *LEAVE.*

AND I GET IT. HERE IN METROPOLIS, OUR LIVES SOMEHOW FEEL *BIGGER.*

IT LOOKS *GREAT* ON YOU, ROBERTA. BETTER THAN ON SUPERMAN, EVEN.

BUT DON'T TELL HIM I SAID THAT.

THANKS, JIMMY.

AND I WON'T.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE WE MOVED, I DON'T FEEL LIKE SUCH A *WEIRDO.*

EVERYBODY LISTEN TO ME—!

HEY! IT'S CHUCK!

CHUCK RIGGS?! YOU GOT A LOT OF NERVE SHOWING UP HERE!

=HUFF HUFF=

PLEASE—!

FOLKS, LET'S HEAR HIM OUT.

WAIT. YOU'RE FRIENDS WITH THAT SOREHEAD AGAIN?!

WELL... "FRIENDS" IS KIND OF PUSHING IT.

SURE, WE'RE FRIENDS! CHUCK HELPED SUPERMAN SAVE ME LAST NIGHT, TOO!

IS THAT TRUE?

YEAH— I GUESS— LISTEN!

WE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE! THIS BUILDING, I MEAN!

WELL...UM...IT— IT'S SUCH A BEAUTIFUL DAY... RIGHT? WHY STAY INSIDE?

HEY, I GOT IT! HOW ABOUT WE GO PRACTICE?! TOMMY CAN SHOW US THAT SWEET FASTBALL!

TOMMY'S ARM IS BROKEN, CHUCK.

OH. RIGHT.

GASP! YOU HEAR THAT?!

TICK TICK TICK

WHY?

THAT TICKING?!

WE GOTTA—!

YOU MEAN THE *TICKING* OF THAT *CLOCK?*

OH, YEAH. OF COURSE. THE CLOCK. HEH HEH.

TICK TICK TICK

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, CHUCK?

HOW ABOUT THIS? MAYBE WE SHOULD, I DON'T KNOW, HEAD OVER TO THE *THEATER* FOR A MOVIE OR SOMETHING?

HEY, THAT'S A *GREAT IDEA!*

I'VE BEEN WANTING TO SEE THAT NEW *CAPTAIN DESMO* FLICK.

SOMETHING'S OFF ABOUT CHUCK. I NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT.

I HEARD THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE A *BLAST!*

METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

MS. LANE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

HELLO, DR. LEE!

I'M WORKING ON AN ARTICLE ABOUT ALL THE **GOOD WORK** YOU'RE DOING HERE AT THE METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

I'M NOT SURE I CAN STILL CONSIDER OUR WORK HERE **"GOOD."**

HOW DO YOU MEAN, DR. LEE?

IT'S...IT'S **NOTHING.**

YOU'LL PROBABLY WANT TO SPEAK WITH **DR. WILSON,** OUR DEPARTMENT HEAD. HIS OFFICE IS AT THE END OF THAT CORRIDOR.

END OF THE CORRIDOR. GOT IT. THANK YOU!

WHAT IN THE—

YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.

OH! HELLO! LOIS LANE, DAILY PLANET.

I MUST'VE TAKEN A ***WRONG TURN*** ON THE WAY TO DR. WILSON'S OFFICE! AND YOU ARE?

DR. WILLIAM JENNINGS.

QUITE AN ***OPERATION*** YOU ALL HAVE HERE, DR. JENNINGS! CARE TO ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS?

"ANSWER A FEW QUESTIONS"! ***HA!***

WHAT A THING TO ASK AFTER GETTING CAUGHT ***SNOOPING AROUND!***

THEN PERHAPS YOU'LL KINDLY DIRECT ME TO ***DR. WILSON?***

I'LL KINDLY DIRECT YOU TO THE ***EXIT!***

GOODBYE, MS. LANE!

ROBERTA, YOU GOTTA TELL ME! WHAT'S SUPERMAN *REALLY* LIKE?

DID YOU GET A WHIFF OF COTTON CANDY CLOUDS AT ALL?

YOU GOTTA STOP WITH THAT.

HE'S WARM AND KIND, BUT *STRONG* AS ALL GET-OUT! YOU KNOW THE METROPOLIS RIVER? HE LEAPT ACROSS IT IN A *SINGLE BOUND!*

AND YOU ACTUALLY HELPED HIM SAVE YOUR BROTHER?

LIKE I WAS SAYING, YOU CHINESE ARE *SO BRAVE!*

NO, NOT REALLY. TO BE HONEST... I WAS *COMPLETELY SCARED* THE WHOLE TIME! RIGHT BEFORE WE FOUND TOMMY, I *THREW UP* INTO A BUSH! RIGHT IN FRONT OF SUPERMAN!

WHICH WAS BETTER THAN THE TIME BEFORE, I GUESS, WHEN I THREW UP ALL OVER MY JACKET AND HANDS!

WHAT I'M SAYING IS, I THROW UP A LOT.

LIKE, *A LOT* A LOT. IN A *NOT-SO-BRAVE* WAY.

Y'KNOW. *GURGLY STOMACH.*

...

...

SOOO...I'M GONNA GO FIND OUT WHAT MOVIE WE'RE WATCHING.

OH.

OKAY.

EXCEPT IT SAYS RIGHT HERE WHAT MOVIE WE'RE GOING TO WATCH.

CAPTAIN DESMO VS. GENGHIS KHAN

THE INTERGALACTIC CONQUEROR

SIGH.

WAIT. THOSE GIRLS, ARE THEY...?

THEY *ARE!*

I'M *SO HAPPY* TO SEE YOU!

ROBERTA!

IT'S *YOU.*

COME ON, HARRIET. WE DON'T WANT TO MISS THE OPENING CREDITS.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HER?

IT ALWAYS SEEMED LIKE SHE DIDN'T LIKE ME.

YOU KNOW HOW VIV IS.

HARRIET! VIVIAN!

MY OLD FRIENDS FROM *CHINATOWN!*

WELL... SHE THOUGHT YOU WERE KIND OF *STANDOFFISH.* EVERY TIME WE ASKED YOU TO COME TO THE MOVIES WITH US, YOU'D TURN US DOWN.

ONLY BECAUSE THE BUS RIDE WOULD MAKE ME FEEL *SICK!*

...

YOU SURE IT WASN'T BECAUSE YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE ***BETTER*** THAN THE REST OF US?

WHAT?!

YOUR FATHER ***THE DOCTOR*** CERTAINLY ACTED THAT WAY.

THAT ISN'T HOW—

THAT'S WHY YOUR FAMILY LEFT ***CHINATOWN,*** ISN'T IT?

NO! IT'S—

LOOK, IT'S BEEN ***SO LONG.***

MAYBE WE CAN SIT TOGETHER IN THE THEATER? I REALLY MISS—

YOU'RE HERE WITH YOUR NEW FRIENDS, RIGHT? I'M SURE YOU'D HAVE MORE FUN SITTING WITH ***THEM.***

NICE BUMPING INTO YOU, ROBERTA.

YEAH...

YOU, TOO.

METRO CAFÉ.

THE NAME "METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT" MAKES IT SOUND LIKE IT'S A GOVERNMENT OPERATION, RIGHT? BUT IT'S NOT.

AT ALL.

I GOT AHOLD OF THEIR FINANCIAL RECORDS, CLARK. NONE OF THEIR FUNDING COMES FROM THE CITY, NOT ONE DIME!

AND YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE WHAT I SAW THERE TODAY! LIKE SOME KIND OF *MAD SCIENTIST'S LAB!*

I SEE HOW ALL THIS MIGHT LEAD TO SOMETHING BIG, LOIS, BUT I'M STILL SURPRISED YOU'RE NOT PUTTING EVERYTHING YOU'VE GOT INTO THE *KLAN* STORY.

THAT'S THE THING, CLARK. I'VE GOT A *HUNCH* THAT—

OH NO.

WHAT ARE YOU *STARING* AT?

THEY'RE APPEARING IN BROAD DAYLIGHT NOW.

MEN CAN ALWAYS FIND NEW WAYS TO DISAPPOINT YOU, CAN'T THEY?

WHAT...?

I GET IT. SHE'S PRETTY. WHY PAY ATTENTION TO A CONVERSATION WITH A ***COLLEAGUE*** WHEN THERE'S A PRETTY WOMAN ACROSS THE SHOP?

LOIS, I DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE HER!

SURE YOU DIDN'T. GO TALK TO HER, CHAMP.

SOME OF US HAVE WORK TO DO. I'LL SEE YOU BACK AT THE OFFICE.

I PROMISE YOU I WASN'T—

WHO WANTS TO TALK TO A PRETTY WOMAN ACROSS THE SHOP WHEN THE ***PRETTIEST, SMARTEST, MOST FEARLESS WOMAN*** I'VE EVER MET IS RIGHT ACROSS THE TABLE?

SON? SON!
WAIT UP!
COME ON.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW YOURSELVES, SHOW YOURSELVES NOW.
HEY! WATCH IT, FELLA!

THE CITY'S SKYLINE IS *SPECTACULAR.*

PRIMITIVE, BUT *SPECTACULAR.*

IS THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT US UP HERE, SON? TO SHOW US THE VIEW?

WE'RE UP HERE BECAUSE I CAN'T BE SEEN TALKING TO MYSELF.

WHAT IS IT THAT YOU WANT?

WE'D LIKE YOU TO ANSWER OUR QUESTION...

"WHY ONLY BE HALF OF WHO YOU *ACTUALLY ARE?*"

HEY, DEMON-BOY!

HOW ABOUT YOU LEVA—LEVI—LEVO—

FLOAT FOR US AGAIN, DEMON-BOY?!

YEAH! SHOOT US WITH THEM *HELLFIRE EYES!*

KYLE, KENNY, *GO AWAY!*

NOT UNTIL YOU SHOW ALL THESE FINE CHURCH-GOIN' FOLKS YOUR *TRUE DEMONIC NATURE!*

KYLE AND ME AREN'T *NUTS,* Y'KNOW! *WE SAW WHAT WE SAW!*

HEY!

CAN'T YOU *CHUMPS* TELL HE DOESN'T WANT YOU AROUND?! *SCRAM!*

THAT RED-HEADED GIRL AND I WOULD SOON BECOME ***BEST FRIENDS.***

AS I WATCHED THE BRAVERMAN BOYS WALK UP TO HER, I FELT MY FACE GO HOT WITH ANGER.

CHECK IT OUT, KENNY! THIS *MOUTHY GIRL* IS STICKIN' UP FOR KENT!

THEY MUST BE *LOVEBIRDS!*

SMOOCHIE! SMOOCHIE!

THEN CAME THE ***VOICES.***

ANGER POOLED INTO MY ***EYES.***

MY FEET BEGAN TO LEAVE THE GROUND.

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO ME AGAIN?!
I THREW YOU AWAY!
NOT AGAIN!
...NO

AS IF THEY UNDERSTOOD—

—THE VOICES LEFT ME.

?!

ALL OF IT LEFT ME.

YEOWCH!

WAP!

NOT TRYING TO BE MEAN, KID, BUT YOU'RE *PRETTY TERRIBLE* AT STICKING UP FOR YOURSELF.

HA HA. YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.

THANKS FOR HANDLING THOSE JERKS.

I WAS FINALLY AN *ORDINARY* BOY.

MY DAD AND I JUST MOVED INTO TOWN.

CAME TO SERVICE HOPING TO MEET SOME FOLKS. MY NAME'S *LANA LANG.*

WELCOME TO SMALLVILLE, LANA. I'M *CLARK KENT.*

PERFECTLY ORDINARY.

PERFECT.

LOOK AT THIS. I *LOVE* BEING A PART OF THIS.

A PART OF *THEM.*

SON...

PLEASE DON'T CALL ME THAT.

I'M FROM A TOWN CALLED SMALLVILLE. I WAS RAISED BY JONATHAN AND MARTHA KENT.

THEY'RE MY PARENTS.

HOWEVER YOU'RE DOING THIS, HOWEVER YOU'RE APPEARING TO ME?

PLEASE.

STOP.

I'VE FINALLY CREATED A LIFE FOR MYSELF WHERE NO ONE LOOKS AT ME IN *FEAR.*

NO ONE WHO ISN'T COMMITTING A *CRIME,* ANYWAY.

PLEASE DON'T *RUIN* THAT FOR ME.

BUT DON'T YOU WANT THE *TRUTH?*

I WANT MY *LIFE* MORE.

GOODBYE.

ALL THIS TIME, I'VE REMEMBERED IT WRONG.

CAPTAIN DESMO, YOU FOOL!

I'VE BEEN A *WEIRDO* ALL ALONG, EVEN WITH MY OLD JACKET, EVEN IN CHINATOWN.

YOU AND YOUR *PITIABLE PLANET* DO NOT STAND A CHANCE AGAINST ME!

FOR I AM *GENGHIS AHKIM THE INTERGALACTIC CONQUEROR!*

YOU UNDERESTIMATE US EARTHLINGS AT YOUR OWN *PERIL*—

ALWAYS WATCHING FROM THE SIDELINES, ALWAYS LOOKING FOR *SOME CLUE* THAT MIGHT HELP ME FIT IN.

NEVER FINDING IT.

YOU ALIEN SCUM!

WE SHALL SEE ABOUT THAT, DESMO! MWHAHAHA!

EGADS! HE'S FLYING! RUN!

AIYEEE!

WHOA!

HOW'D THEY DO THAT?!

GENGHIS AHKIM CAN *FLY*?!

MOVIEMAKERS ARE ***SO CLEVER.*** THEY MUST'VE USED SOME SORT OF WIRING, RIGHT?

NO WAY A ***HUMAN BEING*** COULD DEFY GRAVITY LIKE THAT...

NO MATTER HOW ***STRONG*** OR ***FAST***...

OR ***SUPER.***

JUST LIKE THAT, A ***THEORY*** PIECES TOGETHER LIKE A PUZZLE IN MY MIND.

I HAVE TO TALK IT THROUGH WITH SOMEONE.

HEY, QUIT BLOCKING THE SCREEN!

WHERE'S TOMMY?

SORRY!

HOLD IT AS LIGHT AS YOU CAN, LIKE IT'S AN EGG THAT MIGHT CRACK.

GOT IT?

I THINK SO.

THEN LET 'ER RIP!

PAFF!

YEOW! YOU ALMOST BROKE MY OTHER HAND!

AW, JEEZ! I DIDN'T MEAN TO—

KIDDIN', CHUCK! BUT SERIOUSLY, THAT WAS WAAAY FASTER THAN BEFORE!

WHAT ARE YOU GUYS DOING OUT HERE?

EH. DIDN'T FEEL LIKE BEING STUCK IN A THEATER.

BUT THIS WAS *YOUR IDEA!*

SIS, HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO CONCENTRATE ON A DUMB *SPACE MOVIE* WHEN WE'VE GOT A *CHAMPIONSHIP GAME* COMING UP?

YOUR *CAST* IS GONNA MAKE IT HARD FOR YOU TO PITCH, TOMMY!

WHICH IS WHY I GOTTA TEACH CHUCK HOW TO THROW A PROPER FASTBALL!

WHY *HIM?!*

HE HELPED SAVE ME, DIDN'T HE?

HE DID. BUT YOU EVER WONDER HOW HE KNEW WHERE THE KLAN TOOK YOU?

HE WAS AT OUR HOUSE THAT NIGHT, TOMMY! WEARING A *HOOD!* HE WAS THE ONE WHO THREW THE *BOMB!*

I RECOGNIZED HIS *BOOTS!*

CHUCK...?

...

SHE'S RIGHT.

THAT WAS ME.

LISTEN, I AM *SO, SO SORRY.* I NEVER WANTED TO HURT YOUR FAMILY. I *SWEAR.*

I BELIEVE HIM.

WHAT?! ARE YOU SOFT IN THE NOGGIN?!

CHUCK HERE IS A NATURAL PITCHER, ALMOST AS NATURAL AS ME. YOU KNOW HOW BIG OUR WINDOW IS?

WAY BIGGER THAN THE STRIKE ZONE.

SO... YOU MISSED ON PURPOSE?

I DID. LIKE I SAID, I DIDN'T WANT TO HURT YOUR FAMILY. NOT YOU, NOT THE UNITY HOUSE.

I DON'T WANNA HURT ANYBODY.

HOW WERE YOU GONNA HURT THE UNITY HOUSE?

WHAT? I JUST SAID I DIDN'T WANNA HURT THE UNITY HOUSE!

THEN WHY EVEN BRING IT UP? SPILL, CHUCK! IS THAT WHY YOU WERE ALL NERVES BEFORE?

IS THAT WHY YOU SUGGESTED WE COME SEE A MOVIE YOU DIDN'T EVEN WANT TO SEE?

I...I...

HOW DID SUPERMAN PUT IT?

"IF YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP ANOTHER PERSON, YOU OUGHT TO AT LEAST TRY."

MY UNCLE IS THE ***GRAND SCORPION*** OF THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS, OKAY?! ***HE'S*** THE ONE WHO BROUGHT ME TO THE MEETING IN THAT SPOT BY THE RIVER.

HIS NAME IS ***MATT RIGGS.***

BUT YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND, HE'S A ***GOOD GUY*** DEEP DOWN!

HE MIGHT BE WRONG ABOUT ***THIS,*** BUT HE'S BEEN THERE FOR MY MOM AND ME EVER SINCE WE LOST MY...

EVER SINCE WE NEEDED HIM.

NOW, I DON'T KNOW FOR SURE...BUT I'M WORRIED ***SOMETHING TERRIBLE*** MIGHT HAPPEN TO THE UNITY HOUSE.

EVEN IF IT DOES, THOUGH, IT'S OKAY, RIGHT? BECAUSE WE'RE ALL ***HERE*** NOW!

YOU IDIOT! THE ***KIDS*** ARE ALL HERE, BUT WHAT ABOUT REVEREND LEEDS, RABBI STONE, AND FATHER SHAIN?! DID YOU CHECK THEIR OFFICE?

I DIDN'T EVEN THINK ABOUT THAT...

THEN WE GOTTA GO BACK TO MAKE SURE!

JIMMY!

COME ON!

THE UNITY HOUSE.

AW, JEEZ.

AND LOOK! THE LIGHT IS ON IN THE CLERGY'S OFFICE!

WHICH ONE OF THOSE CREEPS IS YOUR UNCLE?

MY UNCLE'S NOT A *CREEP!* AND HE'S NEITHER ONE OF THOSE GUYS!

I KNOW BECAUSE HIS ROBE'S A *DIFFERENT COLOR.*

BUT...I'M PRETTY SURE HE SENT THEM HERE.

THIS MORNING, I CAUGHT HIM BUILDING A *BOMB.*

CRIPES!

YOU GUYS GO FIND PAY PHONES! ONE OF YOU CALL THE ***POLICE,*** ANOTHER THE ***DAILY PLANET!*** TELL THEM BOTH TO GET OVER HERE RIGHT AWAY!

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!

WE CAN'T LET THOSE KLANSMEN GET AWAY! I'M GONNA TRY TO STALL 'EM, ***LOIS LANE-STYLE!***

WHENEVER SHE DOES IT, ***SUPERMAN*** SHOWS UP IN THE NICK OF TIME!

LET'S HOPE HE DOES THE SAME FOR ***ME!***

NOT THE BRIGHTEST PLAN, BUT I GUESS IT'S THE BEST WE'VE GOT!

ROBERTA, WHAT ARE YOU—?!

NO WAY I'M LETTING YOU FACE THOSE CREEPS ***ALONE! COME ON!***

YOU GUYS GET GOING ON THOSE PHONE CALLS!

SHAKE A LEG ALREADY!

WHO—?!
EXCUSE ME, MISTER, UH—
MR. BEDSHEET BIGOT.

JIMMY OLSEN, CUB REPORTER FOR THE DAILY PLANET. THIS IS MY ASSOCIATE ROBERTA LEE.
HELLO.
YOU BRATS DON'T KNOW WHO YOU'RE MESSING WITH!

OUTTA THE WAY!
WOULD YOU MIND ANSWERING A FEW QUESTIONS?

HERE. A LITTLE SOMETHING TO GET YOU THROUGH THE EVENING SLUMP.

Metro Cafe

IT'S NOT YOUR TURN.

I KNOW. LOIS, ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE COFFEE SHOP... *I'M SORRY.*

IF YOU'RE WILLING, I'D LOVE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT YOUR METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT INVESTIGATION.

HM.

RING! RING!

LIKE I WAS SAYING EARLIER, I THINK THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT AND THE—

SLOW DOWN, YOUNG MAN. I CAN BARELY CATCH A WORD. WHAT'S THIS ABOUT THE *UNITY HOUSE?*

THE UNITY HOUSE...?

CLARK, ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING?

HONESTLY, YOU'RE *IMPOSSIBLE!*

NO! LOIS, I—!

HANG ON.

I'LL PUT YOU THROUGH TO MR. WHITE.

THEY'LL HAVE TO CALL BACK.

LOOK WHO STEPPED OFF THE ELEVATOR.

PERRY WHITE! WHAT IS THIS?!

EXACTLY WHAT IT SAYS IT IS, INSPECTOR HENDERSON! WE'RE OFFERING A *REWARD* FOR THE KLAN!

I DON'T MEAN TO PRY, BUT DID I HEAR SOMETHING ABOUT THE *UNITY HOUSE?*

YOU DIDN'T CATCH HIS NAME, DID YOU?

THE CALLER WAS TALKING AWFULLY FAST. I'M SURE HE'LL CALL BACK IF IT'S IMPORTANT.

IT WAS *TOMMY LEE.*

FIRST QUESTION: WHAT *EXACTLY* IS THIS LOOK YOU'RE GOING FOR?

RACIST POINTY-HEADED GHOST?

RACIST UPSIDE-DOWN ICE CREAM CONE?

RACIST GIANT-SIZED DUNCE CAP?

WE GOT A QUESTION FOR *YOU,* KID.

WHY WOULD A GOOD *100 PERCENT AMERICAN* LIKE YOU PAL AROUND WITH SOME *CHING-CHONG?*

YOUR MOM TAUGHT YOU NOT TO FEED *STRAY DOGS,* DIDN'T SHE? WHAT YOU'RE DOING AIN'T *NO DIFFERENT!*

YOU TAKE THAT BACK BEFORE I—

OW!

WAP!

ROBERTA!

THE CHING-CHONG WANTS TO GET *VIOLENT,* EH?!

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE OFF YOUR MASK AND CALL ME THAT TO MY *FACE?!*

YOU KNOW WHAT WE DO TO *RABID DOGS* HERE IN AMERICA?

WE PUT 'EM DOW—

GRK!

WHAT—?!

SUPERMAN!

WHAT WAS IT YOU CALLED THESE GOONS, ROBERTA?

OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

BIGOTS IN BEDSHEETS.

I *KNEW* YOU'D SHOW UP, SUPERMAN! I JUST *KNEW* IT!

YOU HAVE TO *HURRY!* WE THINK THEY HID A *BOMB* SOMEWHERE IN THE BUILDING!

YOU TWO GENIUSES DECIDED TO BOMB A *CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY CENTER?!*

THIS ISN'T A *COMMUNITY CENTER,* SUPERMAN! IT'S A THREAT TO THE *PURITY OF AMERICA!*

IF YOU TRULY LOVED YOUR NATION—AND YOUR *RACE*—YOU WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT!

GAH!

TOSS

I ONLY NEED *ONE* OF YOU TO FIND THAT BOMB.

D-DON'T LEAVE ME UP HERE!

I WOULDN'T SQUIRM TOO MUCH! WHO KNOWS HOW LONG THAT BRANCH WILL HOLD!

YOU KIDS KEEP A GOOD DISTANCE AWAY, IN CASE I DON'T DEFUSE THE BOMB IN TIME!

KRACK!

YOU'RE *SUPERMAN!* YOU'RE *DEFINITELY* GONNA—

GO! NOW!

NOW, *I'LL* BE FINE NO MATTER WHAT, BUT IF YOU DON'T TELL ME WHERE THAT BOMB IS, *YOU'LL* BE BLOWN TO BITS.

YOU'RE MAKING A *BAD BET,* SUPERMAN!

I'D RATHER *DIE* THAN TELL YOU ANYTHING! IN FACT, I'VE *DREAMED* OF BEING A MARTYR FOR MY *RACE!*

HELL, ONCE THEY CLEAN UP ALL THE *FILTH* IN THIS CITY, THEY'LL PROBABLY PUT UP A *STATUE* OF ME!

MUFFLED NOISES FROM UPSTAIRS.

RABBI STONE! FATHER SHAIN! REVEREND LEEDS!

GOD BLESS YOU, SUPERMAN!

ARE YOU THE ONLY ONES HERE?!

YES, I BELIEVE SO.

WHERE IS THAT BOMB? I CAN MAKE OUT A TICKING SOUND—

TICK TICK TICK...

—BUT IT'S THE CLOCK. THERE'S TICKING EVERYWHERE, ACTUALLY.

A BUILDING FULL OF CLOCKS.

I NEED TO LOOK THROUGH, THE WAY I FOUND TOMMY.

I TRY TO HEAR THE VOICES AGAIN.

TICK TICK

TICK

I TRY TO SMELL THAT GREEN CRYSTAL SMELL.

TICK

COME BACK.

PLEASE. I'M SORRY I WALKED AWAY FROM YOU! I NEED...

I NEED YOU RIGHT NOW! I NEED THE POWER TO LOOK THROUGH.

TICK

FATHER...? MOTHER...?

HA! IT'S TOO LATE, SUPERMAN, EVEN FOR YOU!

SWEET MARTYRDOM, HERE I COME!

THE FLOOR TREMBLES.

RUMBLE

RUMB

I HAVE NO CHOICE.

KRODIK

I RUN.

LEAVE *LAW ENFORCEMENT* TO THE POLICE, PERRY! YOU DON'T SEE MY OFFICERS PUBLISHING *NEWS ARTICLES*, DO YOU?!

WHY *CAN'T* PRIVATE CITIZENS JOIN THE FIGHT FOR *JUSTICE?!* SUPERMAN'S NOT A COP! LOOK AT HIM!

JUST THIS MORNING, I SPOKE WITH A KID, PROBABLY THE *LEAST CONVINCING LIAR* I'VE EVER MET.

LONG STORY SHORT, I'VE NOW GOT A *LEAD* ON THE METROPOLIS KLAN'S MAIN GUY!

DING!

BUT WORD ON THE STREET IS, YOUR HEADLINE *SPOOKED* THE SUSPECT SO BADLY THAT HE'S GONE INTO *HIDING!*

W-WELL, THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT TO—

TRUST ME, "INSPECTOR."

NO ONE IS HIDING FROM THE LIKES OF YOU!

ONE RACE! ONE COLOR! ONE RELIGION!

HEY, HOW ABOUT WE SIT DOWN FOR AN INTERVIEW?

"INTERVIEW?" *HA!*

WHAT A THING TO ASK WHEN YOU'VE GOT A ***KNIFE*** IN YOUR FACE!

GET OVER THERE WITH THE REST OF 'EM!

FUNNY. ***DR. WILLIAM JENNINGS*** SPOKE IN THE EXACT SAME WAY.

I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW ***UNBEARABLE*** IT'S BEEN, WATCHING YOU STRUT AROUND TOWN WITH THAT ***BADGE*** PINNED TO YOUR CHEST, BOY!

HAND IT OVER!

OVER MY DEAD BODY.

FINE. HAVE IT YOUR WAY!

NO, DON'T DO IT! KILL HIM LIKE ***THAT*** AND HE DIES A ***COP!***

HAND OVER THE BADGE, BOY, OR PERRY WHITE GETS IT!

NRF!

I COULDN'T SAVE THE UNITY HOUSE.

I'VE FAILED.

AM I DEAD...?

I MUST BE!

HA HA!

I STAYED TRUE TO THE *VERY END*, O LORD! I'M READY FOR MY *REWARD!*

EXCUSE ME. YOUR FOOT'S ON FIRE.

ACK! THERE ARE *JEWS* IN HEAVEN?!

NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED IF MY FAMILY HAD NEVER COME TO METROPOLIS.

YOU CAN'T THINK LIKE THAT, ROBERTA! THIS IS THE *KLAN'S* FAULT AND NO ONE ELSE'S!

BESIDES, IF YOUR FAMILY HAD NEVER COME, I NEVER WOULD'VE MET YOU.

AND, UH, TOMMY.

YOU AND TOMMY, I MEAN.

JIMMY! MR. WOULD-BE MARTYR HERE BURNED HIMSELF PRETTY BADLY!

WE'LL HAVE TO STOP BY THE ***HOSPITAL*** ON OUR WAY TO THE JAILHOUSE! CAN YOU—

OH, MY FOOT! IT BUUURNS!

GIVE ROBERTA A RIDE HOME? YOU GOT IT, SUPERMAN!

YOU KNOW WHAT I'M WONDERING? WHEN THE KLAN SHOWED UP AT MY HOUSE, THERE WERE ***DOZENS*** OF THEM. HOW COME ONLY ***TWO*** CAME HERE?

MAYBE THE REST OF 'EM WERE BUSY.

BUSY WITH ***WHAT?***

ATTACKING ANOTHER ***TARGET,*** MAYBE?

BUT WHAT OTHER TARGET IS—

!

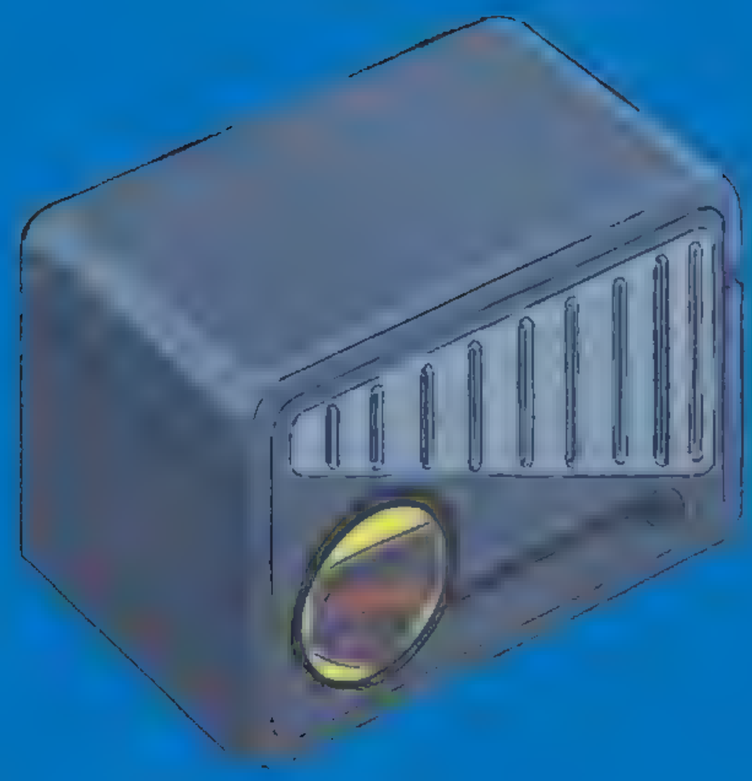
!

WAIT! D-D-DON'T JUST LEAVE ME UP HERE!

GASP!

JIMMY...

OH NO...



CHAPTER 3

SMALLVILLE. 1936.

IN A TINY TOWN LIKE SMALLVILLE, A VISITING CIRCUS WAS A BIG DEAL.

WHICH IS WHY LANA **INSISTED** ON GOING.

AW, IT'S BARELY A DRIZZLE, CLARK! THIS'LL ***TOTALLY*** BE WORTH IT!

I HOPE SO, LANA.

NOT TO COMPLAIN, BUT I WAS **SOAKED.** I WASN'T LOOKING FORWARD TO WATCHING THE SHOW IN **WET PANTS.**

WE REALLY APPRECIATE YOU KIDS LETTING US TAG ALONG ON YOUR DATE!

OH, UM... MA, IT'S NOT A DATE.

CLARK AND I ARE ***BEST FRIENDS,*** IS ALL.

OF COURSE. BEST FRIENDS...JUST LIKE ***MARTHA AND ME.***

I'M SURPRISED THIS MANY PEOPLE CAME OUT!

I'M TELLING YOU, FROM WHAT I REMEMBER AS A KID?

THE ***CIRCUS*** IS... IT'S...

IT'S LIKE THIS ***WHOLE OTHER WORLD*** INSIDE THAT TENT!

FULL OF FUN AND COLOR AND...AND...

WONDER!

YOU WANT ***WONDER,*** YOUNG LADY?

HOW ABOUT LETTING GO OF YOUR TICKET?

DESPITE THE GRUMPY GUY AT THE ENTRANCE, LANA WAS RIGHT.

IT WAS A WHOLE OTHER WORLD INSIDE.

THE ACROBATS, JUGGLERS, AND ANIMALS WEREN'T LIKE ANYTHING I'D EVER SEEN.

I FORGOT ALL ABOUT MY PANTS BEING SOAKED.

THE MOST INTRIGUING PERFORMER, THOUGH?

LADIEEES AND GENTLEMENNN! PLEASE PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER AND WELCOME TO THE CENTER RING A LIVING LEGEND!

A HERO OF MYTH!

THE STRONGEST STRONGMAN TO EVER WALK THE EARTH! I PRESENT TO YOU—

THE MIGHTY SAMSON!

CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK

HEY! IT'S THE GUY WHO TOOK OUR TICKETS!

LANA, HE'S CLEARLY WEARING A *WIG!*

WHAT? *NO!* THAT GUY WAS *BALD!* THIS GUY'S GOT LONGER HAIR THAN *MINE!*

WELL... IT'S NOT *JUST* THAT.

LOOK AT THE WAY HE CARRIES HIMSELF! AND THAT *COSTUME!*

YOU *LIKE* HIS COSTUME?! HE'S WEARING HIS *UNDERWEAR* ON THE OUTSIDE!

HUP— HUP—

YEAH, BUT HE MAKES IT *WORK* SOMEHOW.

HUZZAH!

WOOHOO

GASP

THAT *SMILE!* DEFINITELY NOT THE SAME GUY!

CLUNK CLUNK CLUNK

BUT HE DEFINITELY WAS.

OUTSIDE, THE RAIN HAD GROWN INTO A LIGHTNING STORM.

RUMBLE RUMBLE

KRACK!

:GASP: IS THE TENT—?

FSSSSS

FWOOSH!

BVOOORRR!

AIYEEE!

RUN!

BVOOORRR!

MOVE IT, FOLKS!

LANA, CAN YOU MAKE SURE MY PARENTS ARE *SAFE?* I GOTTA GO HELP!

BUT, CLARK—!

LET HIM GO, LANA! WHEN HE GETS LIKE THAT, THERE'S NO STOPPING HIM!

OY GEVALT!

RUN, GIRL! RUN!

GRRR...

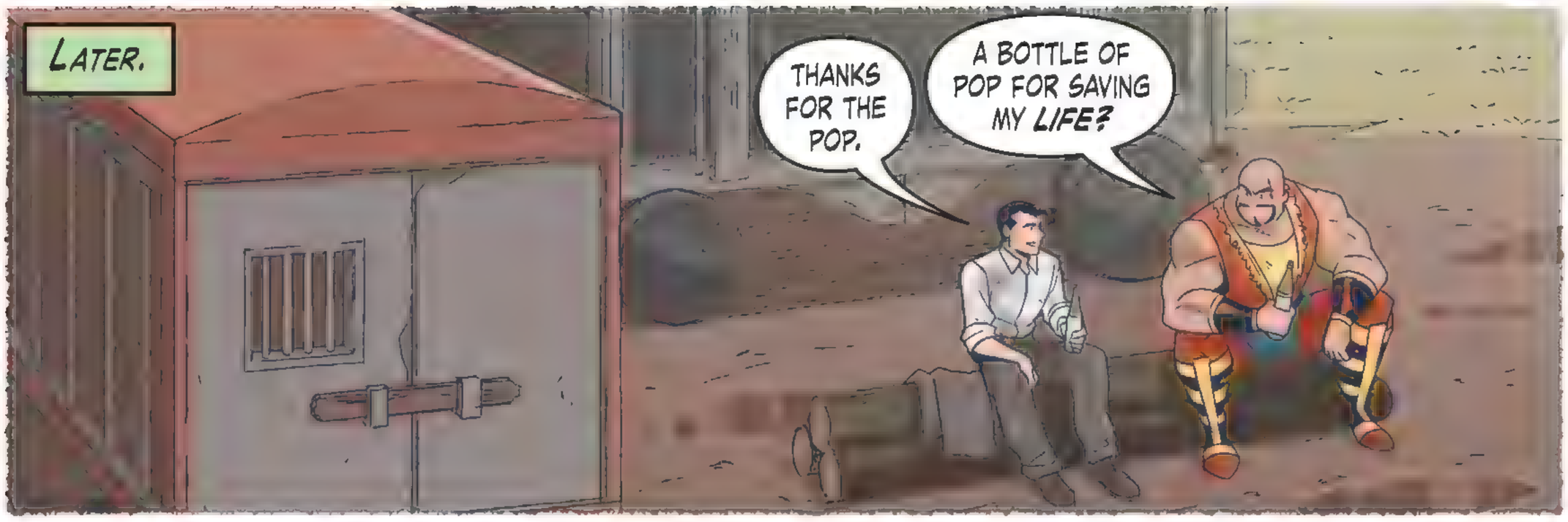
YEOW!

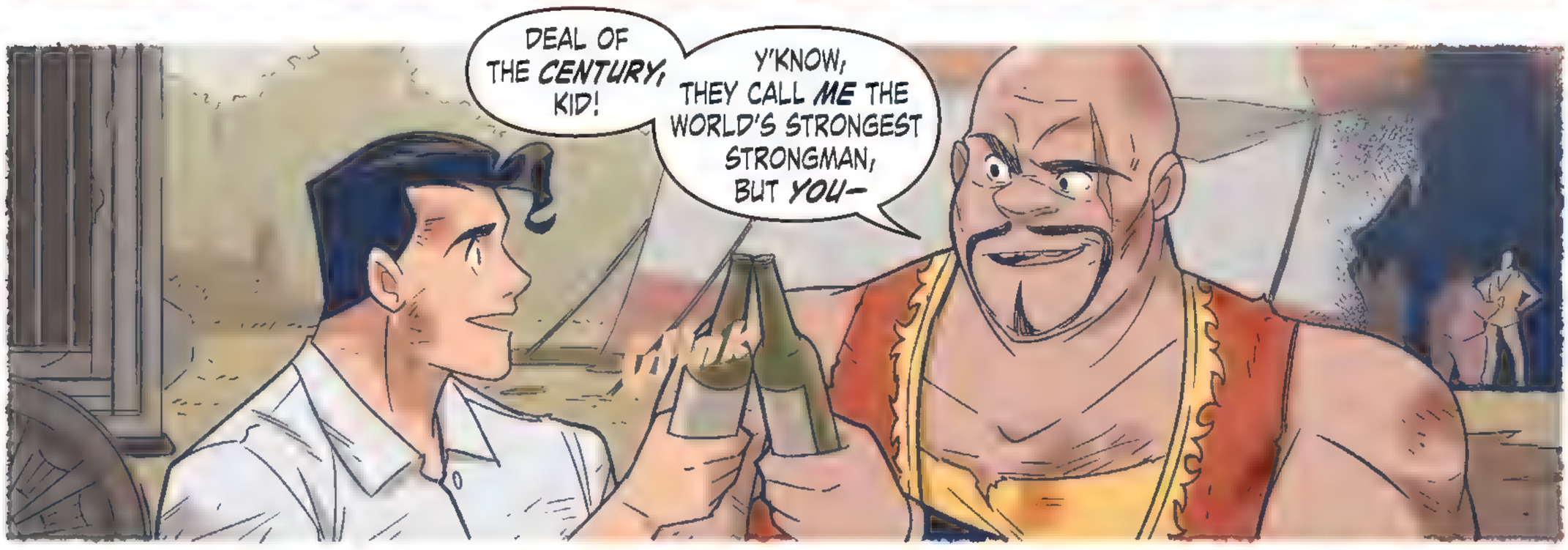
ROARRR!

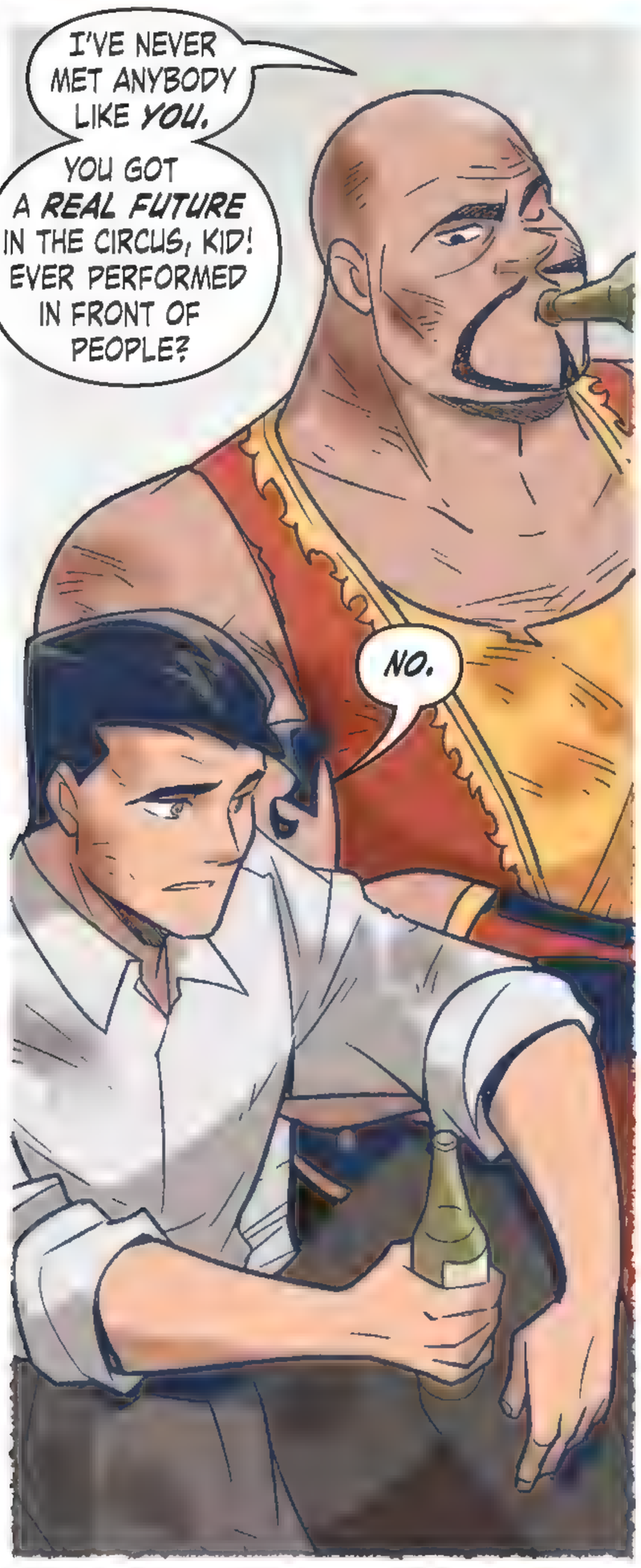
YOU ALL RIGHT, MR. SAMSON?!

ROARR!

?!


LATER.
THANKS FOR THE POP.
A BOTTLE OF POP FOR SAVING MY LIFE?


DEAL OF THE CENTURY, KID!
Y'KNOW, THEY CALL ME THE WORLD'S STRONGEST STRONGMAN, BUT YOU-


I'VE NEVER MET ANYBODY LIKE YOU.
YOU GOT A REAL FUTURE IN THE CIRCUS, KID! EVER PERFORMED IN FRONT OF PEOPLE?
NO.

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID THAT IF PEOPLE SAW WHAT I COULD DO...I'D SCARE THEM.

HA! I HAD THE SAME PROBLEM! KNOW HOW I SOLVED IT?
A COSTUME.
THE MORE COLORFUL, THE BETTER!

BY THE NEXT MORNING, MA HAD SEWN ME ONE.

WHAT IS THIS?!

YOUR FATHER AND I COULDN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT WHAT YOU DID YESTERDAY, SON.

IT'S WHAT YOU WERE **MEANT** TO DO.

BUT THIS **SYMBOL** YOU PUT ON THE CHEST... IT'S FROM THAT OLD PHONOGRAPH MACHINE...

THE **ALIEN** PHONOGRAPH MACHINE. WITH THE **ALIEN** RECORDING OF THE **ALIEN** VOICES.

I ASKED YOUR MOTHER NOT TO SEW IT ON, BUT SHE **INSISTED**.

IT FELT **RIGHT.** OTHERWISE, THE SHIRT WOULD LOOK TOO PLAIN.

BUT IT'S...

AN **ALIEN** SYMBOL.

IT LOOKS LIKE AN **S** IN A FUNNY DIAMOND SHAPE, CLARK. LET THEM THINK IT'S AN **S.**

AND SO I BECAME A **STRONGMAN**, JUST LIKE THE ONES THEY HAVE AT THE CIRCUS, ONLY I **HELP** PEOPLE.

I WAS MAYBE EVEN THE WORLD'S **STRONGEST** STRONGMAN.

BUT STILL A HUMAN STRONGMAN.

TO EVERYONE ELSE, AT LEAST.

METROPOLIS. 1946.

GREAT SCOTT!

NFF!

LOOK! SUPERMAN'S ALREADY HERE!

WHAT'S HE DOING?!

HE MUST BE CLIMBING UP TO THE DAILY PLANET OFFICES!

BUT CLIMBING IS SO SLOW!

WHAT—?

WHAT CHOICE DOES HE HAVE, ROBERTA?

THE NEWSROOMS ARE ON THE 38TH FLOOR! IT'S NOT LIKE HE CAN FLY!

I DON'T KNOW...

JIMMY!

DUCK!

VROOOM!

THE KLAN.

THERE MIGHT BE PEOPLE IN THAT BUILDING WHO NEED OUR HELP!

LET'S GO!

NO ONE'S UP HERE.

WHOOSH

SUPERMAN!

IS EVERYONE ALL RIGHT?!

IT WAS *HORRIBLE!*

THOSE *HOODED THUGS* BURST IN AND TIED US UP!

WE THOUGHT WE'D BE STUCK HERE ALL NIGHT—

—UNTIL JIMMY AND HIS FRIEND CAME TO OUR RESCUE!

JIMMY! ROBERTA! WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING HERE?!

HELPING YOU STOP THOSE *BIGOTS!*

THEY TOOK *HOSTAGES* WITH 'EM, SUPERMAN!

THEY GOT *PERRY, LOIS, AND INSPECTOR HENDERSON!*

ANY IDEA WHERE THEY'RE HEADED?

NO, I'M SORRY.

ACTUALLY, SUPERMAN, COME LOOK AT *THIS!*

THAT LIPSTICK HAS TO BE MS. LANE'S, RIGHT? I THINK SHE LEFT US A *MESSAGE!*

I CAN BARELY MAKE IT OUT! I'M IMPRESSED YOU EVEN FOUND THIS, ROBERTA!

I THOUGHT TO MYSELF, WHAT WOULD I DO IF *I* WERE STUCK IN LOIS LANE'S SITUATION?

I'D LEAVE BEHIND A *CLUE* OF SOME SORT.

W.J...

CALL IT A *HUNCH*, BUT THOSE ARE THE INITIALS OF MY DAD'S CO-WORKER *WILLIAM JENNINGS*.

WHEN HE VISITED MY FAMILY, HE CAME OFF LIKE A *REAL CREEP*.

A *KLANNISH* SORT OF CREEP?

WOULDN'T BE SURPRISED.

IT'S WORTH CHECKING OUT.

JIMMY, ALL RIGHT IF I BORROW THE *OFFICE PHONE BOOK*? I NEED TO LOOK UP JENNINGS'S ADDRESS!

WAY AHEAD OF YOU, SUPERMAN!

WHOOOSH!

THE UNITY HOUSE.

HOLY-!

WHERE'S ROBERTA?!

EXCUSE ME, MR. FIREMAN? HAVE YOU SEEN ***MY SISTER?*** CHINESE GIRL IN A RED SUPERMAN JACKET?

IS SHE FRIENDS WITH THAT JIMMY OLSEN KID FROM THE DAILY PLANET?

YEAH, THAT'S HER!

DON'T WORRY, YOUNG MAN. SHE WASN'T HURT. THANKS TO ***SUPERMAN,*** NOBODY WAS. I THINK JIMMY TOOK HER HOME.

YOU BOYS LOOK LIKE YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH THE WRINGER. WHY DON'T YOU HEAD HOME YOURSELVES?

HEY, TOMMY...?

I'VE BEEN THINKING...WHAT HAPPENED TO THE UNITY HOUSE WAS ***ABSOLUTELY WRONG,*** OF COURSE.

BUT...IS IT REALLY ALL THAT BAD TO WANT TO LIVE AROUND ***ONLY*** PEOPLE WHO LOOK LIKE YOU?

WAIT. WHAT ARE YOU ***SAYING,*** CHUCK?

I...I ***DON'T KNOW!*** I'M JUST TRYING TO MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL!

A *BROKEN ARM'S* NOT ENOUGH?! YOU WANT ME TO QUIT THE TEAM?!

NO, NO! THAT'S NOT—!

YOU WANT MY FAMILY TO MOVE BACK TO *CHINATOWN,* IS THAT IT?!

I...I...!

SPIT IT OUT!

I WANT TO KNOW THAT MY FAMILY'S NOT EVIL!

...

BACK IN CHINATOWN, THE ONLY BASEBALL I EVER GOT TO PLAY WAS *PICKUP.*

THE *UNITY HOUSE* IS THE FIRST TEAM I'VE BEEN ON WHERE ALL THE PLAYERS WEAR MATCHING CAPS AND JERSEYS! A *REAL TEAM,* Y'KNOW?

SURE, I HAVEN'T GOTTEN TO PLAY AN *ACTUAL* GAME WITH YOU GUYS. AND NOW THAT I'M HURT, IT'LL BE A GOOD LONG WHILE BEFORE I DO.

BUT THAT'S WHY I TAUGHT YOU THAT *FASTBALL,* RIGHT? I STILL WANT *US* TO WIN!

I THOUGHT WE WERE ON THE *SAME TEAM,* CHUCK. ARE YOU SAYING WE'RE NOT?

TOMMY... I...I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* I'M SAYING.

WHATEVER.

I'LL SEE YOU AROUND.

ELSEWHERE IN METROPOLIS.

YOU *CLOWNS* MUST'VE DRESSED UP IN YOUR NIGHT-GOWNS FOR A REASON! WHAT DO YOU WANT?!

WE'RE GOING TO TEACH THE DAILY PLANET A LESSON ABOUT INTERFERING WITH *KLAN BUSINESS!*

BECAUSE OF RATS LIKE YOU, *GOOD, HONEST, ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICANS* HAVE TO WEAR HOODS OVER OUR FACES JUST TO SAY WHAT WE *REALLY BELIEVE!*

LISTEN. *I'M* THE ONE YOU REALLY HATE, AREN'T I?

SO HOW ABOUT YOU LET MR. WHITE AND MS. LANE GO?

INSPECTOR HENDERSON ISN'T A *HERO* BECAUSE OF HIS BADGE, YOU IMBECILE!

YOU'RE NOT WEARING YOUR *BADGE* ANYMORE, BOY! NO NEED TO PLAY HERO!

LET *THEM* GO AND YOU CAN DO WHAT YOU WANT WITH *ME!*

OH, WE'RE GOING TO DO WHAT WE WANT WITH YOU *REGARDLESS!*

THE LOYAL KNIGHT WHO GIFTED ME THIS BLADE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT ITS *STORIED PAST!*

SHING!

IT'S BEEN USED IN THE RITUALS OF THE *KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS* FOR GENERATIONS!

HUH. YOU'D THINK AN OBJECT WITH SUCH A 'STORIED PAST' WOULD COST MORE THAN $2.79.

$ 2.79

WHA—?!

HA!

HA HA!

SHUT UP! SHUT UP!

YOU QUIT YOUR LAUGHING, BOY!

AS SOON AS YOU FELLAS QUIT ACTING *LAUGHABLE*, I'LL QUIT *LAUGHING*.

THAT'S IT!

I'M GONNA *CUT* THE LAUGHTER RIGHT *OUT OF YOU!*

SMASH!

SUPERMAN!

IF YOU'RE SMART, YOU'LL SURRENDER IMMEDIATELY!

NEVER!

MY SWORD!

WELL, YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR.

YAAA-

YEOWCH!

WAP!

Y-Y-YOU'RE NOT GONNA PUNCH ME BACK, ARE YOU...?

PLEEEASE DON'T PUNCH ME BACK!

I WON'T PUNCH YOU.

IF I DID, I'D PROBABLY *KILL* YOU.

flick.

KRASH!

!

KLINK!

KLINK!

PERRY! INSPECTOR! HOLD STILL SO I CAN CUT YOU OUT OF THAT ROPE!

KNIGHTS, IF WE ALL WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN HANDLE HIM!

DOUBT IT.

TAKE HIM DOWN!

WHOA!

YIKES!

GAH!

KRAOOF!

HELP! I'M ON FIRE! HELP MEEE!

HANG ON!

FWOOOSH

I'M BURNINGGG!

PAT!

PAT!

STOP MOVING AROUND SO MUCH!

WE GOTTA PUT THIS FIRE OUT!

POW!

USE THIS!

HUH...?

GET OFFA ME! DON'T TOUCH ME!

FUNNY WAY OF SHOWING GRATITUDE, MISTER!

STOMP!

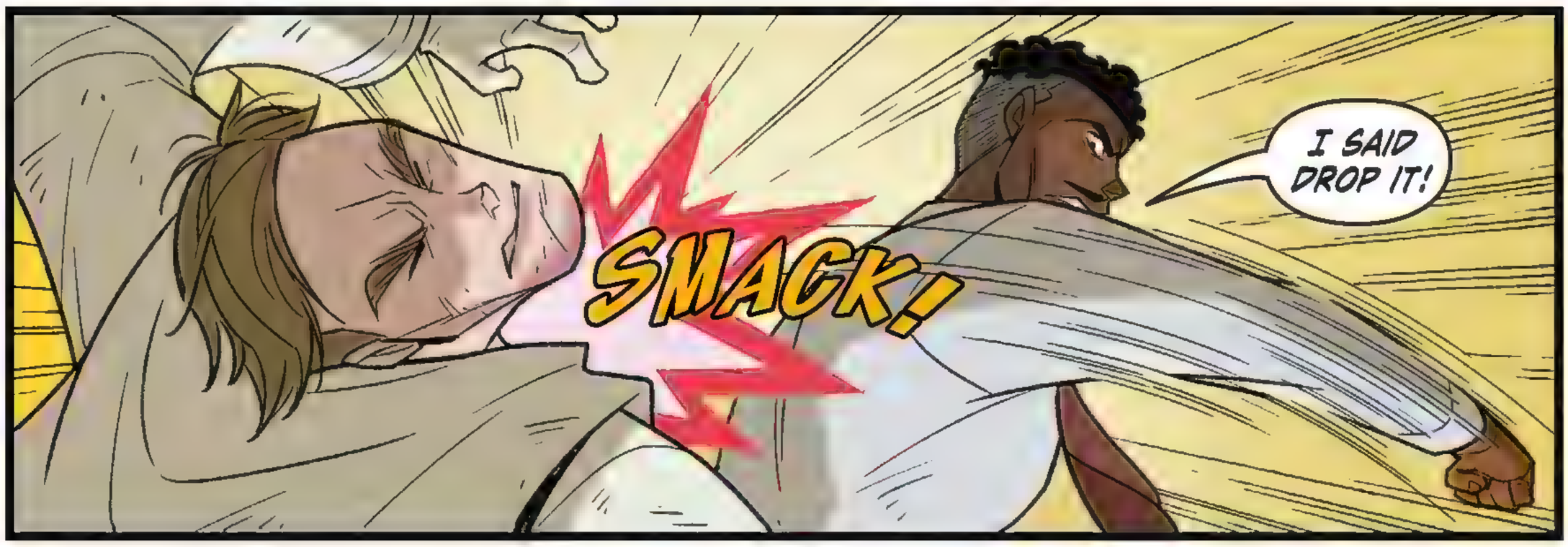
STOMP!

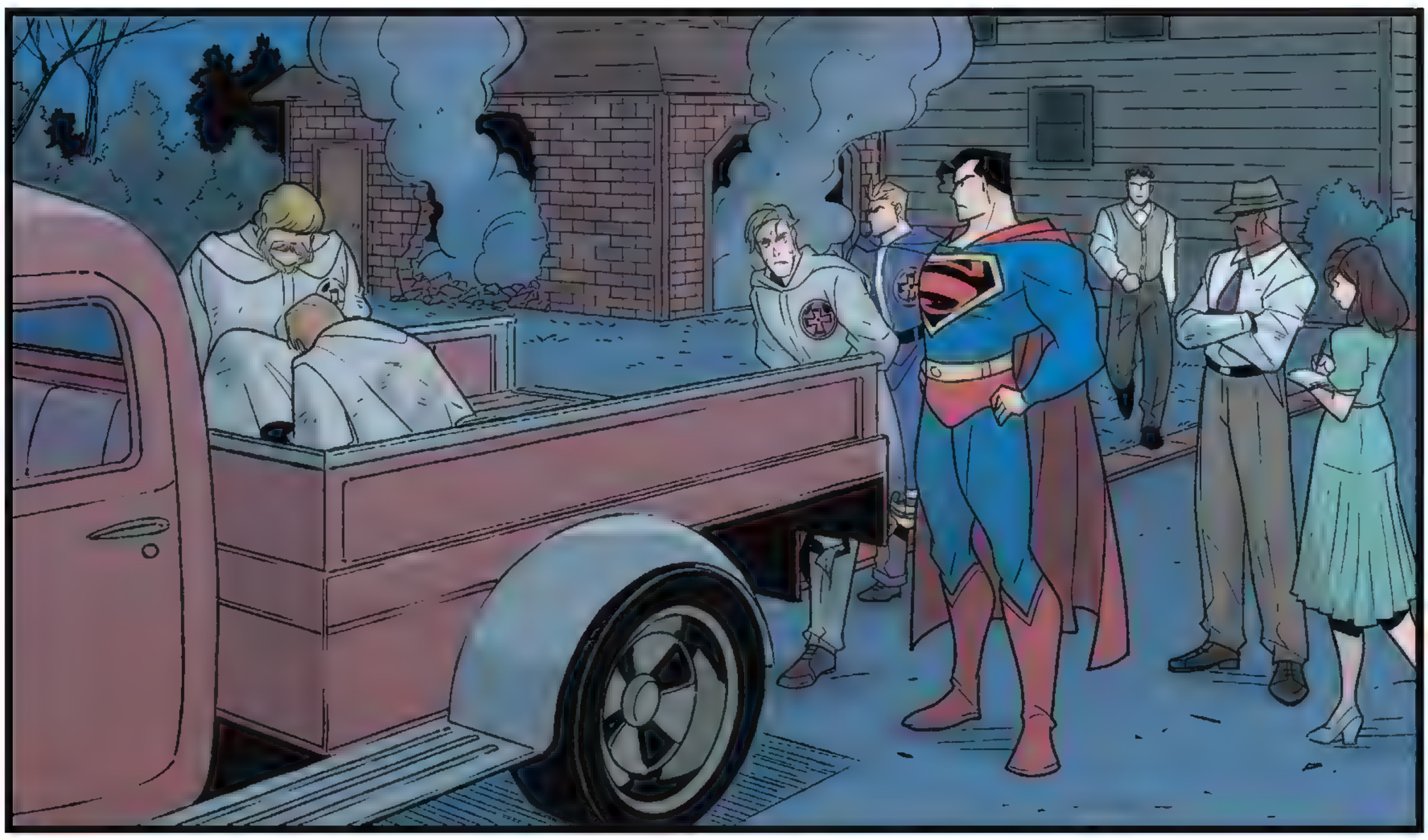
YOU EXPECT ME TO BE *GRATEFUL* FOR GETTING *CONTAMINATED* BY YOU?!

YOU OUGHTTA BE *PUNISHED!*

YOU NO-GOOD, FILTHY—

DROP THAT THING BEFORE YOU PUT SOMEBODY'S EYE OUT!


SMACK!
I SAID DROP IT!



INSPECTOR, I FOUND THIS ON THE GROUND. IT GOT PRETTY *BANGED UP.*

SIGH. I WORKED *SO HARD* FOR THIS.
THE DEPARTMENT WILL REPLACE IT FOR YOU, I'M SURE.
YEAH, BUT THAT COULD TAKE *WEEKS.*

IT'S JUST A *BADGE,* INSPECTOR. IT'S NOT WHAT MAKES YOU A *POLICE OFFICER!*
UNFORTUNATELY, NOT EVERYONE IN METROPOLIS SEES IT THAT WAY, MR. WHITE.

ROBERTA, JIMMY, DON'T GET ME WRONG. I'M NOT CONDONING YOU TWO PUTTING YOURSELVES IN DANGER...

BUT *THANK YOU.*

I TOLD YOU WE'D HELP YOU STOP THOSE BIGOTS, SUPERMAN!

YEAH...

MS. LANE, INSPECTOR HENDERSON, AND MR. WHITE ARE *STILL STANDING.*

STILL DOING THEIR *JOBS.*

EVEN AFTER *EVERYTHING.*

THANK GOODNESS THEY WEREN'T *HURT* BY THE KLAN.

BUT THEY *COULD HAVE BEEN.*

YOU! IN THE *PURPLE!*

ARE YOU THE ONE IN CHARGE? THE ONE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THIS *HATE?*

I'M *THE GRAND SCORPION OF THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS,* IF THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE ASKING!

I'VE HALF A MIND TO—

TO *WHAT*, SUPERMAN? *PUNCH* ME? *KILL* ME? *GO AHEAD!*

KILL ME AND I PROMISE YOU, A *HUNDRED MEN* EXACTLY LIKE ME WILL RISE UP TO TAKE MY PLACE!

THEN I'LL BRING A HUNDRED OF THEM TO *JUSTICE!*

YOU DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE *KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS* ISN'T JUST A GROUP OF *MEN.* WE ARE A *CONVICTION—*

THE CONVICTION THAT A *STRONG* AMERICA IS A *PURE* AMERICA!

AND EVEN *YOU* CAN'T SMASH *THAT* WITH YOUR FISTS!

WHEN PUSH COMES TO SHOVE, YOU CANNOT UNITE A *NATION* OF PEOPLE WHO SHARE NEITHER *BLOOD* NOR *HISTORY!*

AND AS MUCH AS YOU WANT TO *DENY* IT, SUPERMAN, YOU ARE ONE OF *US!*

I'M *NOT* ONE OF YOU! I'M *NOTHING* LIKE YOU!

TELL ME, HOW DID YOU BECOME WHAT YOU ARE? WAS IT *MYSTIC TRAINING,* LIKE THE RUMORS SAY? A *MEGAVITAMIN SERUM?*

THE TRUTH IS, *WHATEVER YOU DID* WOULDN'T HAVE WORKED HAD YOU BEEN OF *INFERIOR BLOOD!*

THAT'S WHY MY NEPHEW ADMIRES YOU SO MUCH, ISN'T IT? THAT'S WHY THE *WHOLE COUNTRY* ADMIRES YOU!

YOU'RE *LIVING PROOF* OF JUST HOW *SUPERIOR* A *WHITE MAN* CAN BE!

GET IN THE TRUCK.

SHOVE!

WHOOOSH!

DON'T WORRY, GRAND SCORPION. I'LL HAVE YOU OUT OF HERE IN NO TIME!

ONE RACE! ONE COLOR! ONE RELIGION!

MY GOOD AND LOYAL KNIGHT!

THANK YOU FOR THE RIDE, SUPERMAN.

YOU'RE NOT FEELING SICK?

I'M OKAY. I APPRECIATE YOU ***SOFTENING*** THE LANDING OF YOUR LEAP.

UM...SUPERMAN?

THIS MIGHT BE COMPLETELY ***OUT OF TURN,*** BUT...

CAN I ASK YOU SOMETHING?

OF COURSE.

WHEN YOU DO THAT...WHEN YOU SOFTEN YOUR LANDING BY ACTUALLY ***DEFYING GRAVITY...*** IS IT STILL CALLED ***LEAPING?*** ISN'T IT MORE LIKE...

FLYING?

I-I-

I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU'RE GETTING AT, ROBERTA!

MAYBE YOU'RE NOT EVEN DOING IT ***CONSCIOUSLY...*** AND I DEFINITELY WOULDN'T HAVE NOTICED IF I DIDN'T HAVE SUCH A ***GURGLY STOMACH.***

BUT YOU'RE... ***LIMITING*** YOURSELF!

I COULD FEEL IT!

WH-WHAT-?!

I'VE THOUGHT AND THOUGHT ABOUT ***WHY.***

I HAVE A ***THEORY.***

...

CAN I SAY IT?

GO ON.

YOU WANT TO ***FIT IN*** BETTER.

YOU WANT EVERYBODY TO BELIEVE THAT YOU'RE JUST A *BETTER VERSION* OF A NORMAL HUMAN.

HUMANS *RUN.* YOU JUST *RUN FASTER.* HUMANS JUMP. YOU JUST *JUMP HIGHER.* HUMANS *LIFT* STUFF. YOU JUST LIFT *HEAVIER* STUFF.

BUT THE TRUTH IS... YOU CAN DO THINGS THAT ARE *ENTIRELY DIFFERENT* FROM WHAT HUMANS CAN DO...

RIGHT?

LIKE *FLY!*

AND YOU *HOLD BACK* BECAUSE YOU'RE AFRAID THAT IF PEOPLE FIND OUT, THEY'LL STOP CALLING YOU SUPER*MAN.* INSTEAD, THEY'LL CALL YOU SUPER...

SUPER *SOMETHING ELSE.*

TO BE HONEST, I'VE TRIED NOT TO GIVE *ANY OF THAT* MUCH THOUGHT.

AFTER ALL, MINDING YOURSELF *TOO MUCH* IS A GOOD WAY TO LOSE YOUR MIND.

BUT YOU GOTTA MIND YOURSELF A *LITTLE!* DON'T YOU SEE, SUPERMAN?

YOU HOLDING BACK ACTUALLY *ENDANGERS* PEOPLE!

LIKE EARLIER TONIGHT! THANK GOODNESS MS. LANE, INSPECTOR HENDERSON, AND MR. WHITE WEREN'T HURT, BUT THEY *COULD HAVE BEEN!*

AND YOU *COULD HAVE* STOPPED THE KLAN BEFORE THEY EVER KIDNAPPED YOUR FRIENDS, BEFORE THEY EVEN *LEFT* THE DAILY PLANET BUILDING! BECAUSE YOU COULD'VE *FLOWN* THERE!

I GUESS... I GUESS WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS...

...I *WISH* IT WERE OKAY FOR YOU TO *FLY.*

IT'S LATE, ROBERTA.

HAVE A GOOD NIGHT.

AW, JEEZ...!

SUPERMAN! WAIT!

I—I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID ALL THAT!

ME AND MY BIG, STUPID MOUTH.

WHOOOSH!

HWOOOSH!

LUTHERAN CHURCH

SMALLVILLE LUTHERAN CHURCH

THIS WEEK! LEV 19:34

KENT

CLARK?! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

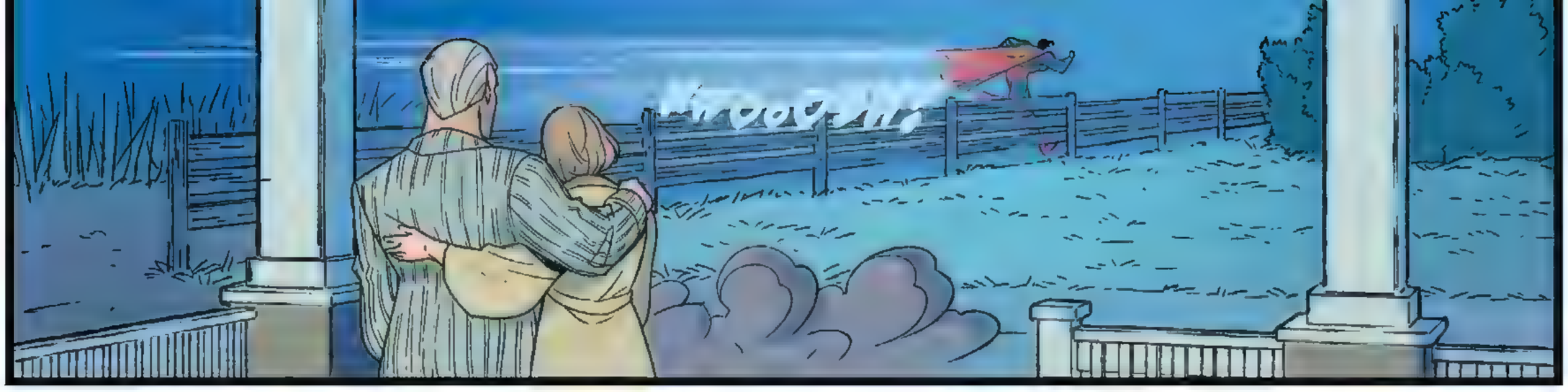
WHAT'S WRONG?!

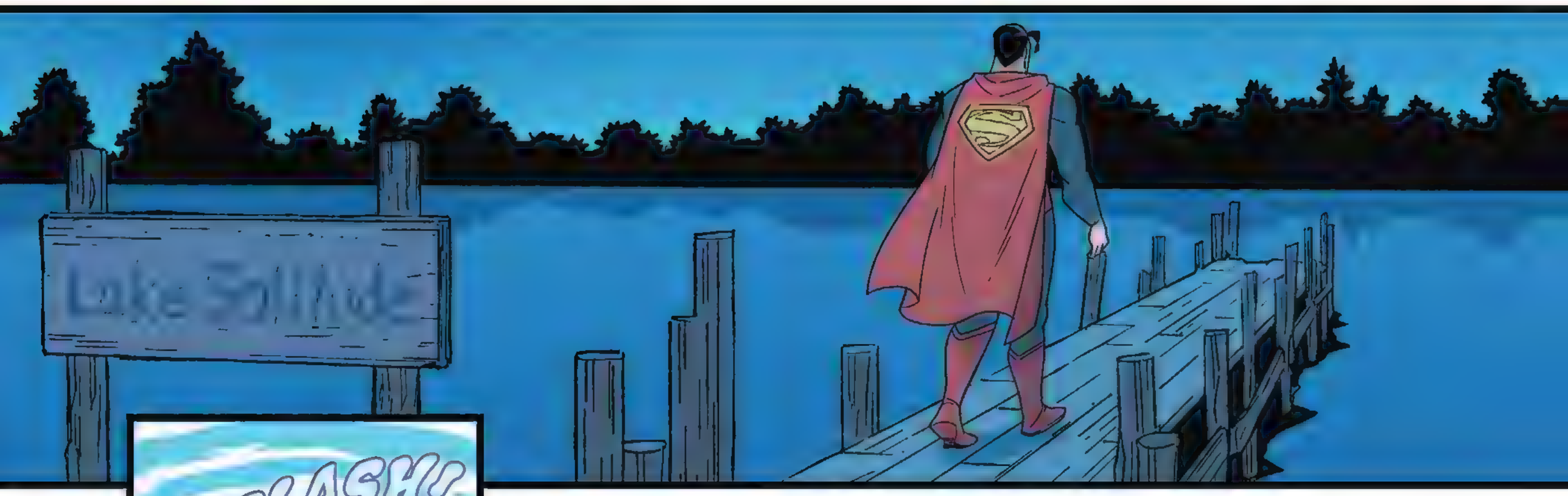
I...I NEED TO KNOW THAT NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, NO MATTER WHAT I MIGHT FIND OUT, *NOTHING* CHANGES BETWEEN US.

PROMISE ME WE'LL *ALWAYS* BE A FAMILY.

OH, SON...

WE MADE THAT PROMISE THE *MOMENT* WE LAID EYES ON YOU.




Lake Solitude

SPLASH!

?!

HELLO, SON.

METROPOLIS. JUST BEFORE DAYBREAK.

HUFF! HUFF!

IT'S ME, MATTHEW RIGGS! THE GRAND SCORPION!

LET ME IN!

KNOCK! KNOCK!

HE WILL SEE YOU NOW.

THANK YOU, MY FELLOW KNIGHT!

GRAND IMPERIAL MOGUL! FORGIVE ME FOR COMING TO YOUR HEADQUARTERS ON SUCH SHORT NOTICE, BUT IT'S AN EMERGENCY!

MY FELLOW KNIGHTS HAVE ALL BEEN ARRESTED! I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO ESCAPED!

HELP US, GRAND IMPERIAL MOGUL! THE METROPOLIS CHAPTER OF THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS IS IN TERRIBLE DANGER!

PLEASE, YOU MUST SEND FOR—

YES, GRAND SCORPION, THE METROPOLIS KLAN IS IN DANGER-

WHAT ***POSSESSED*** YOU TO LAUNCH AN ATTACK ON THE CITY'S ***MOST PROMINENT NEWSPAPER?!***

–BECAUSE OF ***YOUR*** ILL-CONSIDERED ACTIONS!

THOSE SCOUNDRELS AT THE DAILY PLANET THREATENED US FIRST, DR. WILSON! THEY NEEDED A LESSON! IF ***SUPERMAN*** HADN'T SPOILED THINGS–

SUPERMAN?! SO IN ADDITION TO THE POLICE, YOU'VE GOT ***SUPERMAN*** HUNTING FOR US?!

ALL THIS BAD PUBLICITY, JUST WHEN WE'RE ABOUT TO LAUNCH A ***NEW MEMBERSHIP DRIVE!***

THEY WOULD HAVE PAID US ***ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS*** EACH FOR INITIATION FEES! AND ANOTHER ***25 DOLLARS*** FOR ROBES AND HOODS!

YOU'VE COST US ***THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS,*** RIGGS!

BUT, SIR, WHAT'S ***MONEY*** GOT TO DO WITH ANYTHING?!

FOOL!

SLAP!

WOW! JOOK? SALTED EGGS? PORK SUNG?

WE HAVEN'T HAD A BREAKFAST LIKE THIS IN *AGES!*

WE'RE CELEBRATING, CHILDREN!

LOOK AT THIS MORNING'S HEADLINE!

Daily Planet

KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS ARRESTED

AND THAT'S NOT ALL! I *QUIT* MY JOB AT THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT YESTERDAY! IT TOOK ME THREE TRIES, BUT I FINALLY DID IT!

WAIT. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE *HAPPY* ABOUT THAT?

OF COURSE! YOUR FATHER NO LONGER BELIEVES IN THE DEPARTMENT'S *MISSION!*

MA, WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO MEAN? WHAT'S THE MISSION—

SO...WE'RE *MOVING* BACK TO CHINATOWN, THEN?

NO, NO. WE'RE *STAYING.*

I'LL START MY JOB SEARCH IN EARNEST ON MONDAY.

BETWEEN THE TWO OF US, WE'LL HANDLE IT.

BUT FOR NOW, *BREAKFAST!*

RINGGG!

SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR!

MS. LANE!

GOOD MORNING, ROBERTA!

JIMMY TOLD ME YOU WERE THE ONE WHO FIGURED OUT MY LIPSTICK MESSAGE.

I BROUGHT YOU A TOKEN OF *APPRECIATION.*

A PEN!

IN THE HANDS OF THE RIGHT PERSON, A PEN CAN BECOME *THE MOST POWERFUL INSTRUMENT* IN THE WORLD.

IT LOOKS SO *EXPENSIVE!*

THANK YOU!

IF YOU'RE EVER INTERESTED IN A CAREER IN *JOURNALISM,* COME BY MY OFFICE.

THE DAILY PLANET COULD ALWAYS USE *ANOTHER CUB REPORTER.*

I MIGHT TAKE YOU UP ON THAT, MS. LANE. ESPECIALLY IF MY DAD CAN'T FIND A JOB.

DR. LEE LEFT HIS POSITION AT THE METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT? *INTERESTING.* ANY IDEA WHY?

I DON'T KNOW...MY MOM MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT'S *MISSION...*

HM. SOUNDS LIKE YOUR *FIRST LEAD* RIGHT THERE, ROBERTA!

FATHER? MOTHER? HOW ARE YOU HERE?

WE ARE ***NOT.*** WE BOTH PASSED A LONG, LONG TIME AGO.

YOU HAVE BEEN, AND STILL ARE, EXPERIENCING A ***MEMORY PROJECTION*** CREATED BY OUR PEOPLE'S TECHNOLOGY.

BUT FEAR NOT. THOUGH WE ARE GONE, WE CAN STILL OFFER ***HOPE.***

THAT IS THE ***EMBLEM*** THAT YOU, YOUR MOTHER, AND I ALL WEAR, AFTER ALL.

AN ANCIENT SYMBOL FOR ***HOPE.***

IT IS OUR ***FAMILY CREST,*** KAL-EL.

WHAT DID YOU CALL ME?

KAL-EL.

YOUR ***BIRTH*** NAME. YOU SEE, YOU COME FROM A ***FARAWAY*** PLACE—

"—A PLANET CALLED ***KRYPTON.***

"IN SOME WAYS, OUR PEOPLE WERE COMPLETELY ***DIFFERENT*** FROM THE PEOPLE OF EARTH.

"IN OTHER WAYS, WE WERE VERY MUCH THE ***SAME.***"

"YOUR MOTHER AND I DISCOVERED TOO LATE THAT OUR PLANET WAS ***DOOMED.***

"WE HASTILY BUILT AN ***ESCAPE POD*** TO SAVE YOU, THE ***LAST HOPE*** OF OUR PEOPLE.

"BEFORE YOU DEPARTED, WE FOLLOWED AN OLD KRYPTONIAN CUSTOM OF SWADDLING A NEWBORN CHILD WITH A ***RECORDED BLESSING.***

LITTLE ONE, THOUGH WE SEND YOU TO A ***FOREIGN PEOPLE—***

—MAY YOU FIND A ***HOME*** WITH THEM.

MAY YOU FIND ***TRUST*** AND ***HOPE*** AND ***LOVE.***

MAY YOU BE ***BOUND TOGETHER*** WITH THEM, DEAR SON.

MAY YOUR TOMORROW AND THEIRS BE ONE.

WAAHHHH

OUR BLESSING CAME *TRUE*, KAL-EL.

YOU FOUND A *HOME*.

YOU TOLD US BEFORE THAT YOU LOVE BEING PART OF *THEM*.

YOU *ARE* A PART OF THEM, SON, AND YOU *ALWAYS* WILL BE.

BUT YOU'LL *ALWAYS* BE PART OF *US*, TOO.

MY *FIRST LEAD* ON A STORY, LOIS LANE SAID.

IT TOOK ME *ALL MORNING* TO FIND THE BOX OF STUFF THAT DAD HAD BROUGHT HOME FROM THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

HE'D HIDDEN IT IN AN OLD SUITCASE IN THE BASEMENT.

INSIDE ARE WEIRD-LOOKING GADGETS...

A *ROUND CASE* THAT'S HEAVIER THAN IT LOOKS...

AND MY FATHER'S *JOURNAL.*

AS I READ, I LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT THE *METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT.*

IT WAS FOUNDED BY *DR. SEGRET WILSON—*

—A MAN WHO ISN'T WHAT HE ***SEEMS.***

TELL ME, RIGGS, WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING WITH THE ***25 PERCENT*** CUT YOU GET FROM OUR NEW RECRUITS' INITIATION FEES? THE ***TEN PERCENT*** CUT ON THEIR ROBES?

GIVING IT TO ***CHARITY?***

OF COURSE NOT! BUT WE'RE NOT IN THIS FOR THE ***MONEY!*** WE ARE ***PURIFYING AMERICA!***

WAIT A MINUTE. IS IT POSSIBLE YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE ALL THAT ***"ONE RACE, ONE RELIGION, ONE COLOR"*** ROT?

"ROT"?! IT'S THE ABSOLUTE ***TRUTH!***

TSK TSK. YOU'VE GOTTEN DRUNK ON THE ***SLOP*** WE PUT OUT FOR THE ***LITTLE NOBODIES*** WHO WANT TO BELIEVE THAT SOME OTHER RACE IS ***INFERIOR*** SO THEY CAN FEEL ***SUPERIOR!***

AND WE DO IT TO FUND A ***DEFENSE PROGRAM*** AGAINST AN ***ACTUAL THREAT!***

RIGGS, WE ARE A ***BUSINESS*** THAT DEALS IN THE WORLD'S OLDEST COMMODITY: ***HATE!***

COME. LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT THE KLAN IS ***REALLY*** ABOUT.

IT'S FINE FOR ALL THESE ***FOREIGNERS*** TO COME TO AMERICA, SO LONG AS THEY KNOW THEIR ***ROLE!***

TAKE ***DR. LEE,*** FOR EXAMPLE... HE PUT ON HIS ***LAB COAT*** AND DID AS HE WAS TOLD!

BECAUSE OF FOREIGNERS LIKE HIM, I CAN LIVE AS I ***DESERVE!***

BUT EVERY NOW AND THEN, SOMEONE COMES ALONG WITH THE POWER TO ***BREAK OUT*** OF THEIR ROLE. I FOUNDED THE ***METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT*** TO GUARD AGAINST THE ***SINGLE GREATEST THREAT*** TO PEOPLE LIKE ME...

SUPERMAN!

SURE, HE PASSES HIMSELF OFF AS A ***BOY SCOUT*** FOR NOW, BUT WHAT IF SOMEDAY HE TRADES HIS CAPE FOR A ***CROWN?***

UNLIKE DR. LEE, WHO CAN ALWAYS BE CONTROLLED BY OUR ***KLAN MINIONS***, SUPERMAN HAS ***REAL POWER!***

I SPENT ***YEARS*** RESEARCHING A WAY TO ***DESTROY*** HIM, AND NOW I'VE ***FINALLY*** GOT IT!

S-SIR, WHO IS THAT MAN IN THE TANK?!

WHY, HE IS THE ***KEY*** TO OUR MISSION!

FROM HIS SECRET CONTACTS IN GERMANY, DR. WILSON LEARNED THAT THE NAZIS HAD IN THEIR POSSESSION A ***RARE SPACE ROCK*** THAT COULD BE HARNESSED FOR ***ENERGY.***

THEY CALLED THIS ROCK *DER GRÜNSTEIN*—THE ***GREEN STONE.***

FOR ***YEARS,*** DR. WILSON TRIED TO SECURE A PIECE OF *DER GRÜNSTEIN.*

HIS *BIG BREAK* CAME SHORTLY BEFORE MY FATHER BEGAN WORKING FOR HIM.

A NAZI SOLDIER CODE-NAMED THE *ATOM MAN* HAD MADE HIS WAY TO METROPOLIS.

BAM!

THE NAZIS HAD INFUSED THE ATOM MAN'S BLOOD...WITH *DER GRÜNSTEIN*, GIVING HIM ***SUPERMAN- LIKE POWERS.***

DR. WILSON OBSERVED THE ATOM MAN'S BATTLE WITH SUPERMAN IN SECRET. WHAT HE SAW ***ASTOUNDED*** HIM.

THE ATOM MAN DIDN'T STAND A CHANCE, BUT EXPOSURE TO *DER GRÜNSTEIN* SEEMED TO ***WEAKEN*** SUPERMAN!

DR. WILSON ARRANGED FOR THE ATOM MAN TO BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT...TO THE ***METROPOLIS HEALTH DEPARTMENT.***

HE, MY FATHER, AND JENNINGS USED BACTERIA TO EXTRACT *DER GRÜNSTEIN* FROM THE ATOM MAN'S ***BLOOD.***

THEN WE PUT THE NAZI'S SPACE ROCK INTO ***WEAPONRY*** SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO ***DESTROY SUPERMAN!***

IT'S SO *HEAVY!*

IT HAS TO BE! THE *ONLY ELEMENT* THAT CAN CONTAIN *DER GRÜNSTEIN'S* RADIATION—

—IS *LEAD.*

THIS CASE IS SO HEAVY BECAUSE IT'S MADE OF *LEAD.*

!

SO *THAT'S* WHY DAD LEFT HIS JOB. HE STOPPED BELIEVING IN THE DEPARTMENT'S *MISSION.*

AFTER MEETING *SUPERMAN,* DAD NO LONGER SAW HIM AS A *THREAT.*

YOU WANT TO KNOW MY *THEORY* ABOUT SUPERMAN, RIGGS? HE'S VULNERABLE TO A *ROCK* FROM OUTER SPACE BECAUSE *HE* IS FROM OUTER SPACE!

HOW... HOW CAN THAT *BE?!*

ALL THIS TIME, YOU'VE BEEN AFRAID OF THE WRONG KIND OF *ALIEN! HA HA!*

I HAVE *POWER!* AND YOU DO *NOT!*

OUR SKIN MAY BE THE SAME *COLOR,* BUT YOU AND I ARE *NOTHING ALIKE!*

YOU ARE AN *INSECT!* I AM A *GOD!*

YOU STUPID, STUPID FOOL! YOU THINK THE WORLD IS DIVIDED BY *RACE,* BUT REALLY, IT'S DIVIDED BY *POWER!*

VVVVRRR

DR. WILSON! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

I CAN'T HAVE A *BLOODTHIRSTY FANATIC* ENDANGERING MY *REVENUE STREAM!*

GOODBYE, GRAND SCORPION!

BRAAAK!

YOU TRAITOR!

WHAT?! LET GO!

YOU'RE A MISERABLE TRAITOR TO YOUR OWN KIND, WILSON!

HGK!

WELCOME EVERYBODY, TO METROPOLIS PARK! ARE WE IN FOR A TREAT!

TODAY, THE UNITY HOUSE OF METROPOLIS TAKES ON THE GOTHAM CITY BOYS' CLUB FOR THE DELAWARE BAY YOUTH LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP!

PLEASE BE GENEROUS AT THE CONCESSION STAND!

ALL PROCEEDS WILL BE DONATED TO THE RESTORATION OF THE UNITY HOUSE!

HOORAY!

THIS MIGHT BE THE FIRST BASEBALL GAME I'VE HAD TO DRAG YOU TO! WHAT'S GOING ON, TOMMY? ARE YOU GETTING SICK OR SOMETHING?

NAH.

JUST FIGURED THERE ARE BETTER WAYS TO SPEND A SATURDAY.

SINCE WHEN DID YOU BECOME SUCH A BASEBALL FAN, SIS?

ROBERTA! TOMMY! YOU CAME!

WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED IT FOR THE WORLD!

UH

HEY, LEES! OVER HERE!

I GOT *COTTON CANDY!*

AH. GOTCHA.

COME SIT WITH US, ROBERTA!

MAYBE I'LL NEVER BE ***BEST FRIENDS*** WITH THE UNITY HOUSE GIRLS.

Y'KNOW, I NEVER ASKED YOU ***YOUR*** NAMES.

I'M *JOAN.*

AND I'M *ALEXANDRA.*

THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE CAN'T BE FRIENDS ***AT ALL.***

GOOD AFTERNOON, DR. LEE, MRS. LEE!

INSPECTOR HENDERSON! I MUST CONFESS, WE NEVER PROPERLY *THANKED* YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS FOR COMING TO OUR AID ON THAT *HORRIBLE NIGHT.*

YES, THANK YOU. THANK YOU *ALL.*

JUST DOING MY *JOB.*

NO, IT WAS *MORE* THAN THAT. YOU WERE BEING A *GOOD NEIGHBOR.*

LOIS LANE! I WAS HOPING SHE'D BE HERE!

SAVE MY SEAT? I'LL BE RIGHT BACK.

SURE!

I BROUGHT MY DAD'S ITEMS TO SHOW HER.

YOU!

COME HERE!

LET GO OF ME!

LET GO!

RIIIP

YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY *THAT* EASILY, YOU FILTHY *CHING-CHONG!*

MMMPH!

THE CROWD GOES **QUIET** AS UNITY HOUSE STARTING PITCHER **CHUCK RIGGS** GETS READY TO THROW THE **FIRST PITCH** OF THE GAME!

BRAAK!

ONE RACE! ONE COLOR! ONE RELIGION!

LET GO OF ME, YOU CREEP!

UNCLE MATT—?!

PEOPLE OF METROPOLIS...

I AM THE GRAND SCORPION OF THE KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS!

BY YOUR VERY PRESENCE HERE, YOU ARE SUPPORTING THE SO-CALLED UNITY HOUSE—THAT BLIGHTED SYMBOL OF METROPOLIS'S FESTERING IMPURITY!

IS THAT REALLY WHAT YOU WANT?! DO YOU REALLY WANT YOUR CITY—

OUR NATION—TO COME APART AT THE SEAMS?!

HE'S GOT ROBERTA!

MY DAUGHTER!

DON'T WORRY, DR. LEE, I'LL–

YOU'LL DO *NOTHING!*

THAT YOU, BOSS? WITHOUT YOUR *BADGE* YOU ALL LOOK THE *SAME!* *HA HA!*

Click

UNCLE MATT?!

WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?!*

YOU'VE LOST CONTROL...!

GO, CHUCK! *GET OUTTA HERE!*

NEPHEW! MY GOOD AND LOYAL KNIGHT!

I'VE BEEN ALL BUT *ABANDONED,* BUT YOU WILL STAY BY MY SIDE UNTIL THE *VERY END!*

HEY, JERK IN THE GREEN BATHROBE! LET GO OF MY SISTER!

YOU?! YOU SHOULD HAVE ALREADY BEEN *TAKEN CARE OF,* BOY!

HOW ABOUT I *TRY AGAIN?*

VVVRRR...

TOSS

CHUCK!

KRACK!

RGH!

RGH!

WUUMP!

SMACK!

BRRGH!

NEPHEW...?! YOU'RE SIDING WITH *THEM?!* OVER YOUR OWN *FLESH AND BLOOD?!*

CHUCK HERE IS SIDING WITH WHAT'S *RIGHT!*

BECAUSE WHAT *YOU'RE* DOING IS SO OBVIOUSLY *WRONG!*

NOT JUST WRONG. *EVIL.*

YOU'LL PAY FOR YOUR BETRAYAL, CHUCK RIGGS!

YOU'LL ALL PAY!

VVVFFF...

UH

UH

U

UH

U

HA! WILSON WAS *RIGHT!*

HE DOESN'T SMELL LIKE *COTTON CANDY CLOUDS* AT ALL.

HE SMELLS LIKE *ASHES.*

YES!

SUPERMAN... *CAN FLY?!*

HOW IS HE *HOVERING* IN THE AIR LIKE THAT?! IT'S NOT *HUMANLY POSSIBLE!*

HE'S SOME KINDA *GHOST!*

MONSTER!

DEMON!

*FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG, LONG WHILE, NORMAL PEOPLE LOOK AT ME WITH **FEAR.***

EXCEPT ***LOIS.***

*SHE'S THE SAME AS EVER. **UTTERLY FEARLESS.***

*DEEP DOWN INSIDE, I **KNEW** FROM THE MOMENT I MET HER.*

*I KNEW LOIS COULD **NEVER** BE AFRAID OF ME, EVEN AFTER SHE LEARNED **THE TRUTH.***

*THAT'S WHY I FELL IN **LOVE** WITH HER.*

YOU ALL WANT TO KNOW ***HOW*** HE CAN ***FLY?!***

HOW HE CAN SHOOT ***HEAT RAYS*** OUT OF HIS EYES?!

YOUR ***MOST BELOVED CITIZEN*** ISN'T A ***CITIZEN*** AT ALL!

GO ON, SUPERMAN! TELL THEM WHAT YOU ***REALLY*** ARE!

PEOPLE OF METROPOLIS... I...I...

I'M FROM *ANOTHER PLACE.*

I WAS BORN IN A *DISTANT GALAXY,* ON A PLANET CALLED *KRYPTON.* I CAME HERE AS AN *INFANT.*

BUT I AM STILL THE *MAN* YOU'VE ALWAYS KNOWN!

I'M STILL YOUR FELLOW *CITIZEN!*

YOU SEE NOW?! THE *KLAN OF THE FIERY KROSS* HAS ALWAYS PROTECTED AMERICA FROM *FOREIGN THREATS!*

AND SUPERMAN IS THE *MOST FOREIGN* OF THEM ALL!

GRAND SCORPION! TAKE DOWN THAT — *THAT ALIEN!*

SEND HIM BACK WHERE HE CAME FROM!

WHAT?! HOW MANY TIMES HAS SUPERMAN *SAVED* OUR CITY?!

AND YOU'RE GONNA TURN ON HIM JUST LIKE *THAT?!*

SAVE US, GRAND SCORPION!

PEOPLE! THIS IS *SUPERMAN* WE'RE TALKING ABOUT!

YOU HEAR THAT, ALIEN? ALL THE *REAL ONE HUNDRED PERCENT AMERICANS* WANT YOU *EXTERMINATED!*

AND I'VE GOT JUST THE *WEAPON* TO DO IT!

DIE, YOU ALIEN SCUM!

FFFWWWOOSH

GRF!

I'M OVERWHELMED BY THE SMELL OF ASH AND ROT AND... A DYING PLANET.

I FIGHT TO STAY CONSCIOUS.

UUUH...!

THAT WEAPON MUST BE POWERED BY *DER GRÜNSTEIN!* IT'S *KILLING* SUPERMAN!

THE ONLY THING THAT CAN STOP ITS RADIATION...

IS LEAD.

SUPERMAN! CATCH!

USE IT TO STOP HIS WEAPON!

THUD

GRAAA-

WHAT...?!

KLINK!

WWWWEEE-!

KA BOOM!

STRENGTH FLOODS BACK INTO MY BODY.

IT FEELS LIKE DAWN.

GET HIM, SUPERMAN!

YEEEAH!

WHA...?!

WANNA KNOW HOW TO TELL US APART?

SMACK!

I'M THE ONE WITH THE AUTHORITY TO ARREST YOUR SORRY BEHIND!

IT'S OVER, GRAND SCORPION.

SURRENDER.

OH, IT'S OVER, BUT NOT THE WAY YOU THINK!

METROPOLIS MUST PAY!

WE ALL MUST PAY!

HA HA HA!

TICK TICK TICK TICK

TICK TICK TICK TICK

TICK TICK TICK TICK

H-HOW DID YOU DO *THAT?!*

I'M NOT TOTALLY SURE. I'VE BEEN DISCOVERING *A LOT* ABOUT MYSELF LATELY.

KRK!

YOU REALLY ARE A *FOOL,* SUPERMAN! YOU HAVE SUCH *POWER,* EVEN I MUST CONCEDE THAT YOU ARE THE *TRUE SUPERIOR RACE!*

WHY FIGHT FOR A FAMILY OF *CHING-CHONGS?*

WHERE I'M FROM, WE TAKE CARE OF *OUR OWN.*

YOU'RE CALLING *THE LEES* "YOUR OWN"?

YES.

HA HA! YOU'VE BEEN *BRAINWASHED* BY CORRUPT NEWSPAPERS AND TEXTBOOKS, SUPERMAN!

THE LEES AREN'T *"YOUR OWN"!* YOU SHARE NO *BLOOD* WITH THEM! NO *HISTORY!* THERE IS LITERALLY *NOTHING* THAT BINDS YOU TOGETHER!

THAT HAS BEEN THE KLAN'S POINT *ALL ALONG!*

A NATION BOUND BY NOTHING *CANNOT LAST!*

BUT WE *ARE* BOUND TOGETHER.

THE LEES AND I...OUR FRIENDS AT THE DAILY PLANET AND THE UNITY HOUSE AND THE POLICE DEPARTMENT... *EVERYONE* DOWN THERE, REALLY...

WE ARE BOUND TOGETHER BY THE *FUTURE.*

WE ALL SHARE THE *SAME TOMORROW.*

THAT INCLUDES EVEN *YOU,* ONCE YOU'VE *RENOUNCED* YOUR HATE AND *PAID* FOR WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

I'D RATHER HAVE NO TOMORROW AT ALL!

HRK!

SLASH

HA HA HA HA!

HNNN...

SUPERMAN!

!

WHOOOOOSHH!

THERE'S ALWAYS A TOMORROW.

LATER.

MS. LANE.

SUPERMAN.

I'VE GOT MY USUAL *QUESTIONS.* YOU FINALLY READY TO GIVE ME *ANSWERS?*

I AM. *SOME* OF THEM, ANYWAY.

ARE YOU A COFFEE DRINKER?

SUPERMAN CAN *FLY!* I DON'T KNOW IF I'LL *EVER* GET USED TO SEEING *THAT!*

YOU SAID IT.

THE GAME'S GONNA HAVE TO BE RESCHEDULED.

THAT DOESN'T MEAN ***WE*** CAN'T STILL PLAY! IT'D BE A PITY TO LET ALL THIS ***BEAUTIFUL SUNSHINE*** GO TO WASTE!

YOU ALL SHOULD FIND A FIELD THAT ISN'T SO TORN UP, THOUGH.

HEY, CHUCK! I'M GONNA GO INVITE THE ***GOTHAM KIDS*** TO JOIN US FOR A PICKUP. WANNA COME ALONG?

GO ON, SON. GO WITH YOUR ***FRIENDS.*** I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

WE'LL BE ALL RIGHT.

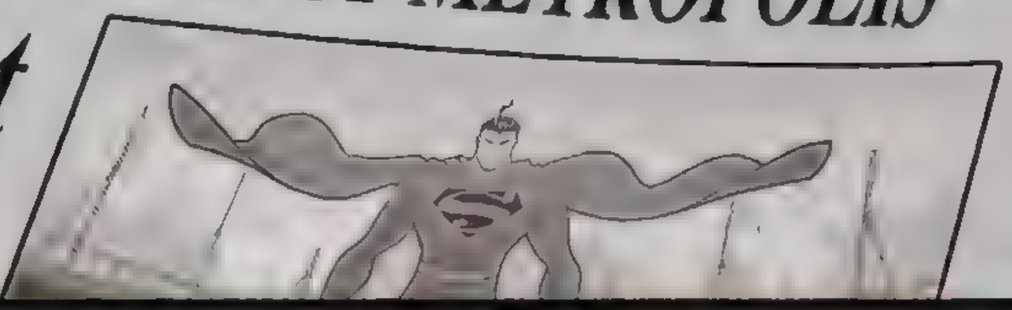
ROBERTA! ***CATCH!*** I SAW HOW YOU THREW THAT METAL BALL TO SUPERMAN!

YOU'RE ***PITCHING!***

Daily Planet

SUPERMAN: IMMIGRANT FROM KRYPTON, CITIZEN OF METROPOLIS

His "S" Is an Ancient Symbol for Hope



HI, MR. KENT!

ROBERTA LEE! NICE TO SEE YOU!

HOW'S THE REST OF THE FAMILY?

GOOD. DAD GOT A NEW JOB OFFER. MOM ENROLLED IN SOME CLASSES AT METROPOLIS UNIVERSITY.

TOMMY'S HELPING THE UNITY HOUSE TEAM PREPARE FOR THE RESCHEDULED CHAMPIONSHIP GAME.

"RESCHEDULED"...? OH, THAT'S RIGHT! BECAUSE ALL ***HECK*** BROKE LOOSE AT THAT FIRST GAME!

UNTIL SUPERMAN SHOWED UP. YOU MISSED ONE OF THE ***BIGGEST STORIES*** OF THE YEAR, MR. KENT!

SIGH. I SEEM TO DO THAT A LOT.

YOU HERE FOR JIMMY?

MS. LANE, ACTUALLY.

SHE'S IN HER OFFICE. ***HUMMING*** TO HERSELF...

...IF YOU CAN BELIEVE IT.

I'VE NEVER, EVER SEEN HER IN SUCH A ***GOOD MOOD.***

HMMM...

MS. LANE? I DON'T MEAN TO BOTHER YOU...

ROBERTA! WHAT A *LOVELY* SURPRISE!

I CAME TO GIVE THIS PEN BACK TO YOU. IT'S *TOO EXPENSIVE.* I CAN'T ACCEPT IT.

NONSENSE!

YOU'RE GOING TO NEED IT FOR YOUR NEW JOB.

I WAS SERIOUS ABOUT THAT CUB REPORTER POSITION.

REALLY...?!

BUT STILL...IT HAS *YOUR* INITIALS ON IT. YOU SHOULD HAVE IT.

YOU KNOW I ALWAYS DO MY *HOMEWORK,* DON'T YOU?

WHEN I WROTE THAT ARTICLE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FAMILY, I RESEARCHED YOUR FATHER, YOUR MOTHER, YOUR BROTHER—

—AND YOU, *LAN-SHIN LEE.*

MY NAME IS ***LAN-SHIN LEE.***

I'M A ***CUB REPORTER*** FOR THE DAILY PLANET.

I'VE WORKED HARD TO MAKE METROPOLIS— ***THE CITY OF TOMORROW*** — MY HOME.

JUST LIKE ***SUPERMAN.***

THE END.

THE END

Figure 1. Superman as he appeared in the Fleischer Studios cartoons of the 1940s.

In 1946, Superman took down a gang of robed, hooded white supremacists. He did it over sixteen episodes of *The Adventures of Superman*, America's most popular radio show at the time. The plot went something like this: A Chinese American family moves to Metropolis. The Clan of the Fiery Cross, fictional stand-ins for the real-life Ku Klux Klan, burns a tall wooden cross on the family's lawn. Superman leaps to the family's defense.

When I first heard about it, I thought, "A Chinese American family? Neat!" I've watched and read Superman stories since I was little. I wasn't used to finding characters in them who looked like me.

Figure 2. Portrait of an African American Union soldier and his family, taken between 1863 and 1865. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-36454.

In January of 1865, when the bloody Civil War was nearing its end, the federal government of the United States passed the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery except as a way to punish crime.

Later that same year, a group of men gathered together in Tennessee for the very first meeting of the Ku Klux Klan. These men believed in white supremacy, the idea that people from Western and Northern Europe are just plain better than all other kinds of people. They feared that the newly freed black slaves would ask for equal rights and equal treatment.

The Klan terrorized African Americans and their white allies not just in Tennessee, but all across the South. They issued threats, burned down churches, and murdered countless people.

I can't remember when I first discovered Superman. Was it the classic 1978 movie starring Christopher Reeve? Or the old *Super Friends* cartoon? Or the Superman puzzle book I bought at a school book fair in the first grade?

I don't know for sure. He seems to have always been there.

I liked his powers, of course, but I loved his costume. The emblem on his chest looked like a badge, or maybe a shield. It told everybody that he was Superman, and that was awesome.

In 1865, white supremacists in California read newspaper articles about the Ku Klux Klan in the South. They felt inspired. Few African Americans lived on the West Coast, but plenty of Chinese did.

People who looked like me first began coming to America in large numbers at the beginning of the 1800s. By the time the Civil War ended, Chinese made up ten percent of California's population, and more were coming.

The federal government was already making noise about granting African Americans the right to vote. If they did the same for Chinese immigrants, what would become of white supremacy in the West?

In 1868, a missive appeared in the San Francisco Bay Area calling the Ku Klux Klan to "Action! Action! Action!" Soon after, Klansmen started terrorizing Chinese immigrants and their white allies not just in California, but up and down the West Coast. They issued threats, burned down churches, and murdered countless people.

The terrorism in the West was never as widespread nor as organized as the terrorism in the South, but it was still terrifying. The largest mass lynching in California's history happened in Los Angeles Chinatown in 1871. A mob rampaged through a Chinatown street known as Negro Alley. Although the mob did not explicitly claim to be the Klan, they definitely acted Klan-like. They hanged to death between seventeen and twenty Chinese men and boys.

I've never had a run-in with the Ku Klux Klan. The racism I encountered as a kid wasn't nearly as dramatic as a fiery cross. It was quiet and subtle.

In the seventh grade, I wrote a story about Cobra Commander's death. Cobra Commander is the archenemy of G.I. Joe, a team of superhero soldiers who ruled after-school cartoons in the 1980s.

Mr. Stevens, my teacher, liked my story so much that he read it to the whole class. He ended in his most ominous voice, "As Cobra Commander breathed his last, he hissed, 'G.I. Joe has won!'"

The other students clapped. I tried to keep my smile as humble as possible.

"G.I. Joe," one of my classmates said to me. "Cool story."

We'll call him Danny. Danny was broad-shouldered, hazel-eyed, and athletic. He wore clothes that you saw on billboards. And he never tied his shoes, which everybody thought was awesome.

He gave me a thumbs-up. My smile stopped being humble.

Later in P.E., I saw Danny standing on the soccer field. He'd actually talked to me, I thought. I ought to return the favor.

Figure 3. My little brother and me in our awesome 1980s outfits.
Used with permission.

I walked up to him. "Hey, Danny," I said.

"Hey," he said. "G.I. Joe. Cool story, man! High five!"

He put his hand up.

As soon as I reached for it, he pulled back.

"I'm not touching no…" Then Danny said a word that rhymes with "stink."

I watched his shoelaces drag along the grass as he walked away.

After the Civil War, white supremacist politicians in the South began enacting Black Codes, laws that made sure African Americans would remain second-class citizens. Although the Fifteenth Amendment granted African American men the right to vote, the codes kept them out of the voting booth. They also kept them out

Figure 4. Portrait of a Chinese American family, taken between 1898 and 1905. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-17885.

of white neighborhoods, schools, churches, and even restrooms. The codes became popularly known as Jim Crow laws.

White supremacists in the West came up with an even more clever tactic. They saw that the federal government no longer tolerated slavery, so they began to argue that Chinese immigrants were actually slaves. They pointed out that the Chinese worked in terrible, slave-like conditions. If America really wanted to get rid of slavery, they said, the country had to close its borders to the Chinese.

Their argument was ridiculous. Chinese immigrants did live unquestionably difficult lives. They were often the victims of brutal, unfair contracts, and they couldn't fight back because their testimony wasn't recognized in American courts.

But as bad as things were, they weren't slaves. Nobody could sell off their loved ones at a moment's notice.

Even so, the tactic worked. In 1882, America passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, effectively ending all legal immigration from China to the United States.

By the end of the 1800s, with Jim Crow laws and the Chinese Exclusion Act in place, the Ku Klux Klan no longer felt threatened by African Americans in the South or Chinese immigrants in the West. People stopped joining, and their membership shrank.

Shortly after the incident with Danny, I started pestering my mom to take me to the local mall. One Saturday afternoon, she finally did. I made a beeline for a store called Aca Joe that sold clothes you saw on billboards.

I picked out a bright white sweatshirt with the store's logo on the chest, the letters ACA stenciled in an oval. It looked like a badge, or maybe a shield.

I silently hoped that it would protect me from that word that rhymes with "stink."

It did not.

In 1915, a movie called *The Birth of a Nation* opened in theaters all across America. It portrays the Ku Klux Klan as a team of white supremacist "heroes" who hide their identities underneath robes and hoods while "defending" the country against the "threat" of the newly freed slaves. In one scene, Klansmen burn a

tall wooden cross, a fiery symbol of their hatred. The real-life Klan had never done this before.

The movie was a hit. Audiences flocked to see it. Companies sold Klan-themed merchandise like hats and aprons. Fans hosted Klan-themed parties and invited their friends to come dressed up as Klansmen. *The Birth of a Nation* made between $50 and $100 million, making it the first-ever blockbuster movie. Even President Woodrow Wilson was a fan. After watching the film at a special screening at the White House, he described it admiringly as "writing history with lightning."

Within a few months, the Ku Klux Klan was back in business. And this time, they *were* a business. They hired a publicity agency to help them make as much money as possible.

One of their strategies was to expand their circle of hate to include more kinds of people. The new Klan didn't just hate African Americans and Chinese immigrants, they also hated Mexicans, Middle Easterners, Japanese, and Filipinos, as well as Roman Catholics and Jews from Eastern and Southern Europe.

Although they continued the Klan tradition of violence, the second Klan started hosting family-friendly events like picnics and parades to attract new members. Taking a cue from the movie, they burned tall wooden crosses at their events.

The second Ku Klux Klan was a hit. At its peak, it had several million dues-paying members.

Superman first appeared in 1938, in the very first issue of a comic book series called *Action Comics*. The hero was very different from how he is now. The S emblem on his chest hadn't yet evolved into its familiar diamond shape. He worked at a newspaper called the *Daily Star*, not the *Daily Planet*. Lois Lane was in the office, but Jimmy Olsen and Perry White were nowhere to be seen.

His powers were different, too. He was super-strong and super-fast, but he couldn't fly. He could only leap. He couldn't shoot heat rays out of his eyes or blow freeze breath from his mouth, either. Those would come later.

Superman was created by two teenagers in Cleveland, Ohio, named Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster. They were

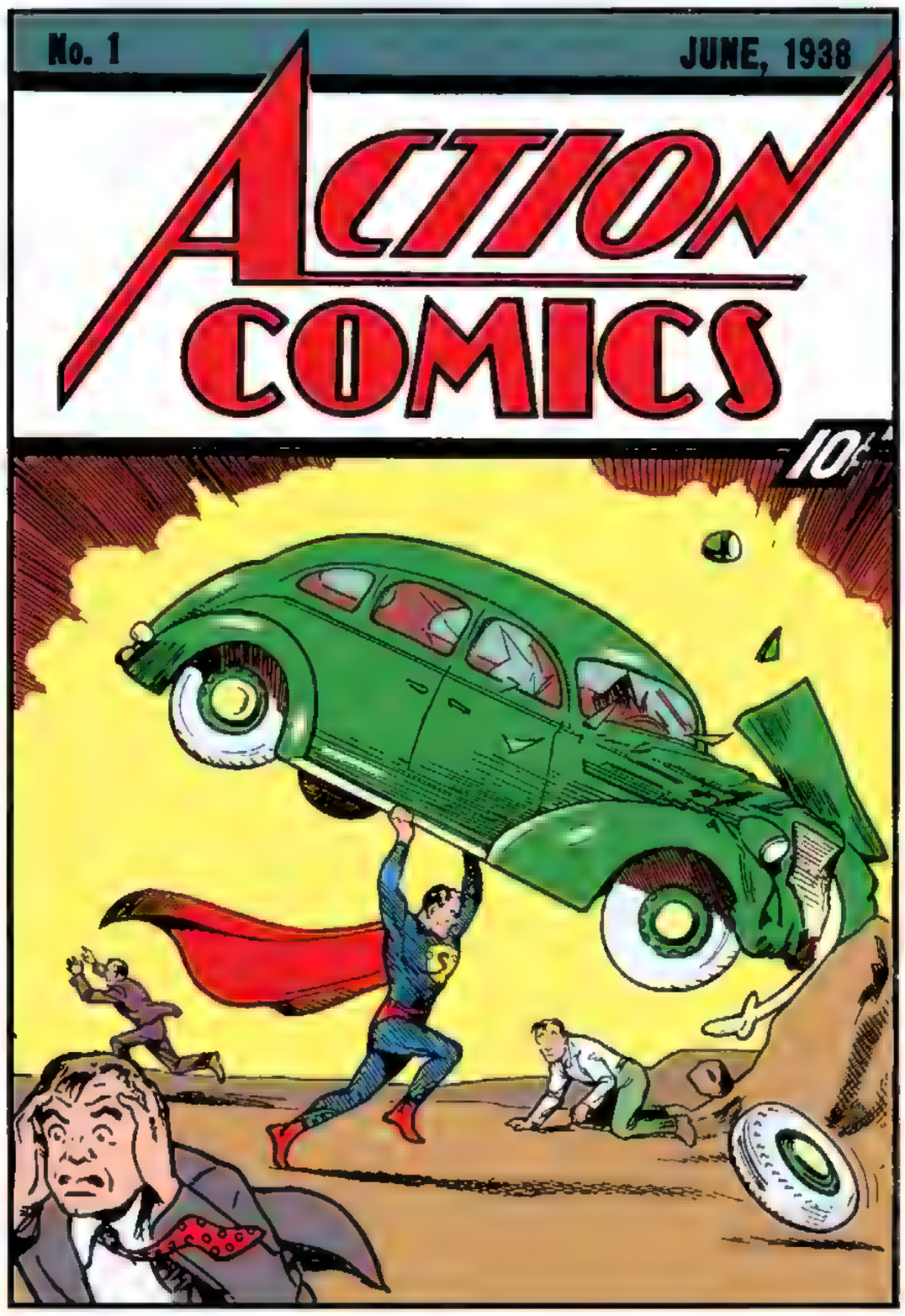


Figure 5. *Action Comics* #1, cover art by Joe Shuster.

both sons of Jewish immigrants. As white supremacist ideas grew stronger and stronger in Europe, hatred for Jews grew worse and worse. Jerry and Joe's families worried that things would turn violent, so they escaped to America.

To fit in better, both families changed their last names. The Siegels were originally the Segalovichs and the Shusters were the Shusterowichs. Unfortunately, the name change did not protect them from hate. When Jerry and Joe were growing up in Cleveland, it wasn't uncommon for job ads in the local newspaper to say, "No Jews Need Apply."

Often, Jews could only find work in the roughest parts of town. Jerry's dad ran a secondhand clothing store in just such a neighborhood. When Jerry was 17 years old, someone tried to rob the store. Jerry's dad suffered a heart attack and died.

Jerry and his friend Joe loved stories about aliens, space men, and other planets. They loved them so much that they created their own fanzine called *Science Fiction*.

In the third issue of *Science Fiction*, published in 1933, Jerry and Joe wrote and drew a story titled

Figure 6. Joe Shuster and Jerry Siegel, creators of Superman, with M.C. Gaines.

"The Reign of the Superman," about a man who gets mind-control powers, turns evil, and tries to destroy the world by spreading hateful thoughts. In the end, a do-gooder reporter confronts this evil "Superman" to save the day.

In the five years between *Science Fiction* #3 and *Action Comics* #1, Jerry and Joe came up with several game-changing ideas.

First, they decided to make Superman good. Instead of having mind-control powers like a mad scientist, they made him strong and fast, like a pulp magazine hero.

Second, they dressed him up like a circus strongman. Circuses were very popular back then. Performers wore colorful, skin-tight costumes so that audience members in the back row could still see them.

Finally, Jerry and Joe made Superman an alien from another planet. He would be an immigrant, like their parents, and he would hide his identity underneath a red tie, a white shirt, a blue jacket, and a pair of glasses. He even had another name to fit in better: Clark Kent.

Superman was a hit. Readers flocked to buy his comics. Demand for Superman merchandise was so intense that his publisher had to set up Superman Inc., a subsidiary dedicated to licensing the hero's likeness. Soon, kids all across America were playing with Superman paper dolls, puzzles, and paint sets.

Then on Monday, February 12, 1940, Superman made his way to radio, America's most popular entertainment medium at the time.

It was on the radio that Superman would make one of his most important contributions to America.

By the end of the 1930s, war had broken out in Europe and Asia. Jerry and Joe's parents' worst nightmares came true. German white supremacists called Nazis began to systematically arrest and murder the Jews in their country.

At first, America tried to stay neutral.

Then on December 7, 1941, the Empire of Japan, an ally of Nazi Germany, attacked an American naval base at Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii. More than two thousand Americans were killed.

Japan, Germany, and Italy had formed an alliance known as the Axis. Within days, President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared war on all three Axis powers. America had officially entered World War II.

Back then, the United States army observed Jim Crow by separating American soldiers into regiments by race. The army's nonwhite regiments were not as well equipped nor as well supported as the white regiments. Nonwhite soldiers were often passed over for promotions to leadership positions.

This hypocrisy infuriated many Americans. In January of 1942, a young African American named James G. Thompson wrote a letter to the *Pittsburgh Courier*. In it, he expresses how much he wants to serve his country and help America defeat the "forces of evil." But he also asks, "Should I sacrifice my life to live half American?"

He ends his letter by challenging America to fight for two victories: a victory against the Axis powers abroad and a victory against inequality at home.

A double victory.

African Americans enlisted in record numbers, far more than for the first World War. Other nonwhite Americans did, too. They fought in the hopes of James G. Thompson's double victory.

The attack on Pearl Harbor changed things for Chinese Americans in an unexpected way. Almost overnight, our public image flipped.

DC Comics, the publisher of this graphic novel, is named after *Detective Comics*, the company's longest-running title. That's what the letters DC stand for: Detective Comics.

The very first issue of *Detective Comics* came out in 1937, four years before America entered the war. The cover shows a drawing of a Chinese villain with slanted, demonic eyes and an evil frown. Before Pearl Harbor, this was how many Americans thought of the Chinese: sneaky, criminal, and threatening. If you wanted to buy something illegal, you would go to the neighborhood where all the Chinese people lived.

After Pearl Harbor, America realized that China was its greatest ally against Japan. Suddenly, Chinese Americans weren't sneaky, criminal, and

Figure 7. President Roosevelt signs a declaration of war against Japan. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-15185.

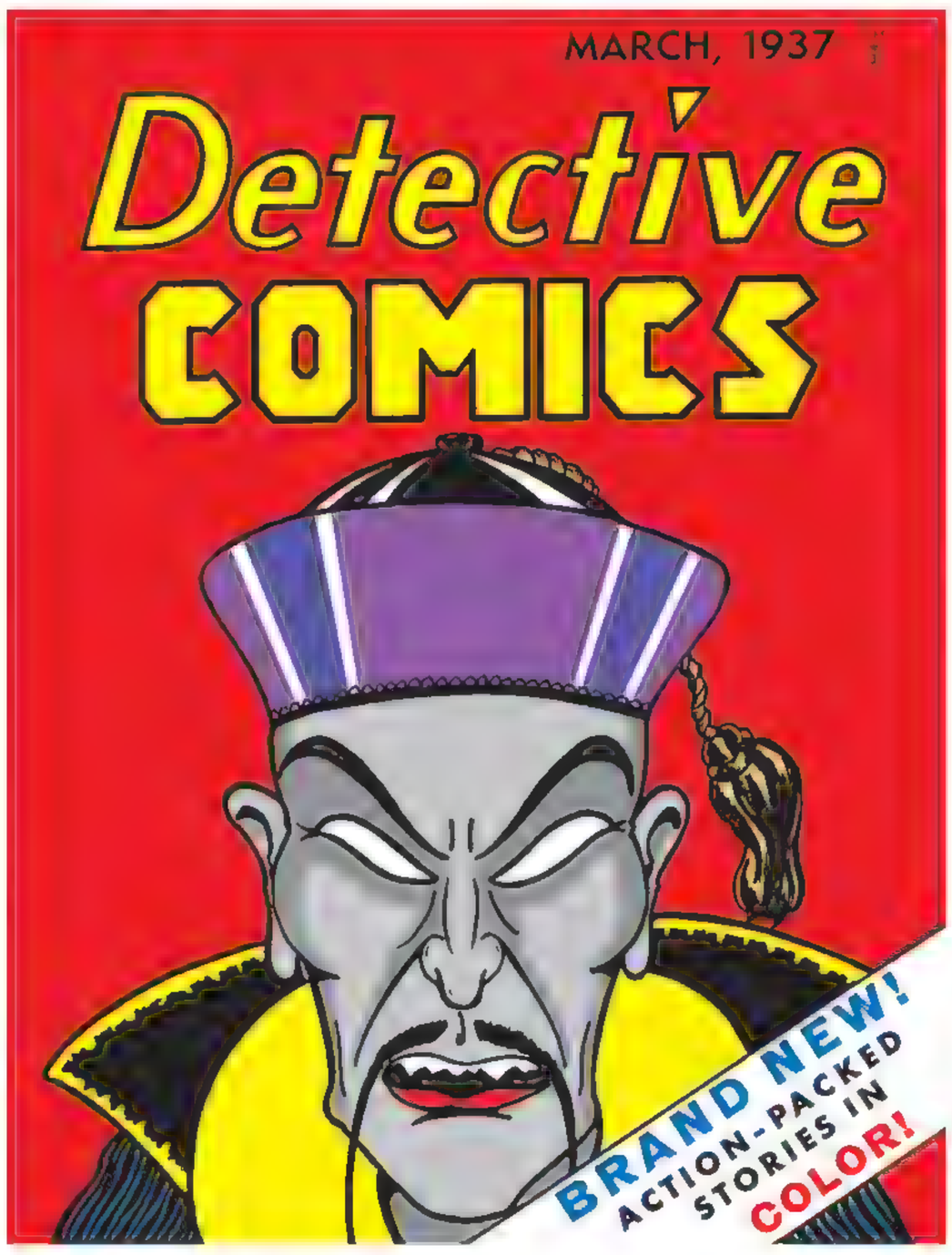


Figure 8. *Detective Comics* #1, 1937.

threatening anymore. We became hardworking, loyal, and brave.

Unlike African American and Japanese American soldiers, some Chinese American soldiers were even allowed to integrate into white regiments.

On December 21, 1941, *Time* magazine published

an issue about Pearl Harbor. The cover shows a drawing of Yamamoto Isoroku, the Japanese admiral who had masterminded the attack. The artist drew Admiral Yamamoto with slanted, demonic eyes and an evil frown.

The stereotypes that were once applied to the Chinese had been refocused solely on the Japanese.

That same issue of *Time* has an article titled, "How to tell our friends from the Japs." It lists instructions to figure out if a person is Chinese or Japanese. After decades of being villains, the Chinese in America were now friends.

In February of 1942, an executive order signed by President Roosevelt forced Japanese Americans out of their homes and into internment camps until the war's end. It seemed like a reasonable strategy for dealing with a sneaky, criminal, and threatening population.

People of German and Italian descent were also interned, albeit on a much smaller scale, though the vast majority were not citizens. Sixty-two percent of the internees in the Japanese camps were citizens of the United States.

The Adventures of Superman radio show starred Clayton "Bud" Collyer, one of the most in-demand voice actors of the 1930s and '40s. With his tall frame and thin mustache, he didn't look much like Clark Kent, but because of his uncanny ability to switch from nerdy newspaper reporter to superhero, Collyer became the first actor to ever play Superman.

The show was a hit. After just two months of episodes, it topped the charts as the highest-rated kids' program in America. Millions of listeners tuned in three times a week, and their hunger for stories encouraged the writers to quickly develop their hero and his world. The show introduced many important pieces of the Superman mythos, including the *Daily Planet*, Perry White, and Kryptonite. Even Superman's powers evolved. He switched from leaping to flying for the first time on his radio show.

During World War II, Superman faced off against Nazi villains like Der Teufel, the Scarlet Widow, and the Atom Man.

Superman spent the war years fighting hate.

On May 8, 1945, Nazi Germany surrendered. Japan surrendered three months later on September 2. America and our allies had won.

The year before, on June 22, 1944, President Roosevelt had signed the G.I. Bill into law. The bill offered the men and women who had served so valiantly in World War II a number of benefits, including money for college and loans to buy homes and start businesses.

Veterans returned home full of hope. This was especially true of nonwhite veterans since the G.I. Bill did not contain any language that excluded them because of their race. After years of sacrifice, the double victory seemed to finally be within reach.

Figure 9. Ad for *The Adventures of Superman* radio show.

By this time, *The Adventures of Superman* was more popular than ever, with four million listeners per episode, but it needed a new direction. Now that the Nazis had been defeated in real life, Superman couldn't keep fighting them in fiction.

But who was a threat to peace in postwar America?

Not everyone looked forward to the possibility of a double victory. On the evening of May 9, 1946, a doctor named Samuel Green led a group of men up Stone Mountain, near Atlanta, Georgia. Green was a grand dragon of the Ku Klux Klan.

As grand dragon, Green had watched the second Klan collapse before the war. Many Klansmen left once they realized the entire operation was just a money-making scheme. Others left after their leaders' criminal behavior came to light. One Klan leader had been convicted of murdering his secretary. Another was in prison for murdering a rival. Still others were arrested for bribery and theft.

Samuel Green longed for a Klan revival. That night on Stone Mountain, he and his followers built a tall wooden cross and set it on fire. They announced a brand-new era of hate.

As Green had hoped, newspapers all over the nation covered the ceremony. *Life* magazine even published a three-page photo spread. Although the text called the Klansmen bigots, the gorgeously shot photos showed well-dressed, clean-cut men gathered around a fiery cross that shone brightly against a dark sky.

The Ku Klux Klan was about to get back on its feet.

The Klan's original revival had been inspired by a movie about men in white robes.

Its next revival would be stifled by a radio show about a man in a red cape.

No one is sure who first came up with the idea. Stetson Kennedy, an intrepid anti-Klan reporter, said he had brought the idea to the radio show's staff. Kenyon and Eckhardt, an advertising agency that worked with the show, said the idea was actually theirs.

Bob Maxwell, the head of Superman Inc., claimed he had to convince Kenyon and Eckhardt to get on board. He certainly had reason for wanting his company's premier superhero to take on the Klan. As a Jewish American, Maxwell recoiled in horror when he read about what white supremacists had done to Jewish people in Europe. He felt a duty to fight bigotry however he could.

To avoid getting sued by an organization that was legally recognized by several states, the show's writers created a stand-in organization called the Clan of the Fiery Cross. There was no mistaking their intention, though. The fictional villains had the same costumes, rituals, and beliefs as the real-life Ku Klux Klan.

Maxwell read through 25 different scripts before landing on the right one. There were plenty of risks, so he wanted to be careful. What if the story was too preachy? Or too scary? Superman might alienate his young fans.

Figure 10. Captain Barnes and Captain John C. Young, taken in 1944. Used with permission.

Figure 11. This photo of Arthur Hebert of the 1st Marine Division was taken in 1943. His father was lynched by the Ku Klux Klan the same year he was drafted. Used with permission.

Even worse, what if a listener only tuned in to a part of an episode and left with the impression that Superman actually condoned bigotry? The script had to get things just right.

On June 10, 1946, the first episode of the 16-part "The Clan of the Fiery Cross" story line aired. For the next several weeks, listeners all across America huddled around their radios to listen as young Tommy Lee, his father Dr. Lee, and his unnamed mother and sister moved into Metropolis and ran afoul of a group of violent bigots. They cheered when Superman leapt to the family's defense.

The story line had its detractors. Klan supporters in Atlanta called for a boycott of the show's sponsors. Bob Maxwell even received death threats from the New Jersey Klan.

Most people, though, loved it. *The Adventures of Superman* received awards from the United Parents Association and the Boys Clubs of America. *Newsweek* magazine called it "the first children's program to develop a social consciousness." Listenership soared.

Some believe that Superman's radio defeat of the Clan of the Fiery Cross led to the real-life Klan's public image downfall. After being portrayed as bumbling, hateful rubes on a children's show, the Ku Klux Klan would never again command the same level of respect it had once enjoyed.

After World War II, many Chinese American veterans did what the Lee family did in "The Clan of the Fiery Cross." With help from the G.I. Bill, they moved out of the nation's Chinatowns and into the suburbs.

They were often met with hostility. Once they got to their new neighborhoods, some were threatened. Others had garbage thrown on their lawns. Some chose to move in the middle of the night to avoid trouble.

Even so, in part because of the public image shift that had happened after Pearl Harbor, Chinese Americans were able to make the move.

Not all nonwhite Americans were as lucky. Black veterans had a much harder time accessing the G.I. Bill's benefits, despite the bill not having any

language about race. In the South, where most African Americans lived, the federal government handed over the bill's administration to racist local officials. Many black veterans were denied the home loans they had rightfully earned, so they were unable to make the same move the Chinese Americans had made.

Japanese Americans also faced hardships. Even after they were released from the internment camps, most could not recover the homes and businesses that had been taken from them. Their own government had erased their pre-war lives.

"The Clan of the Fiery Cross is made up of intolerant bigots," Clark Kent tells Jimmy Olsen in the "Clan" story line's third episode. "They don't judge a man in the decent American way by his own qualities, they judge him by what church he goes to, and by the color of his skin.

"Intolerance is a filthy weed," he continues. "The only way to get rid of it is by hunting out the roots and pulling them out of the ground!"

Superman was leading us to a bright new tomorrow. Unfortunately, postwar America didn't follow him all the way. We left the double victory incomplete.

My mother was born in China in 1945, a year before the end of World War II. During the first years of her life, her family moved from one city to the next, trying their best to escape violence and starvation. They eventually made it to Hong Kong and then Taiwan.

After graduating from a Taiwanese college, my mother came to the United States. She met my father, who had also come from Taiwan. The two of them went on to earn master's degrees despite not having completely mastered English. They courageously faced down racism and other indignities and went on to build a life for themselves and their family.

My parents were able to achieve all that they have not only because they worked hard (and believe me, they worked hard), but also because they immigrated over two decades after the Lees first moved to Metropolis, to an America that had not given up the struggle for a true double victory.

Figure 12. My mother around the time she came to America. Used with premission.

Figure 13. My father and his friend Dave when they were college students. Used with permission.

We are still in the midst of that struggle.

After my father arrived in America and before he met my mom, he was terribly lonely. He lived in a boarding house with other students. One of them was named Dave. Dave had dark brown hair and Clark Kent glasses, and he'd grown up in a town that was driving distance from campus.

Dave must have sensed that my father needed a friend. Despite the language barrier, Dave began talking with my father. First one conversation, then another. On holidays when the house cleared out, Dave invited my father to go with him to his parents' home. Dave's parents and siblings welcomed my father with open arms, and they shared many meals together.

"I felt a lot less lonesome during the holidays," my father says. "I'm grateful for that warm friendship."

Fifty years have passed. My father and Dave each found wives, raised families, started and then ended careers. They are friends to this day.

When I think about what the future ought to be like, I don't think about my junior high classmate with the untied shoes. I think about the friendship between my dad and Dave.

Superman is one of our nation's—and the world's—most enduring icons. He seems to have always been there, and he's not going away anytime soon. Ever since defending a Chinese American family in 1946, he's stood for tolerance, justice, and hope.

Even today, the immigrant from Krypton challenges us to follow his example more fully and more perfectly.

We have to meet his challenge.

After all, though our yesterdays may be different, we all share the same tomorrow.

Gene Luen Yang

August 2019

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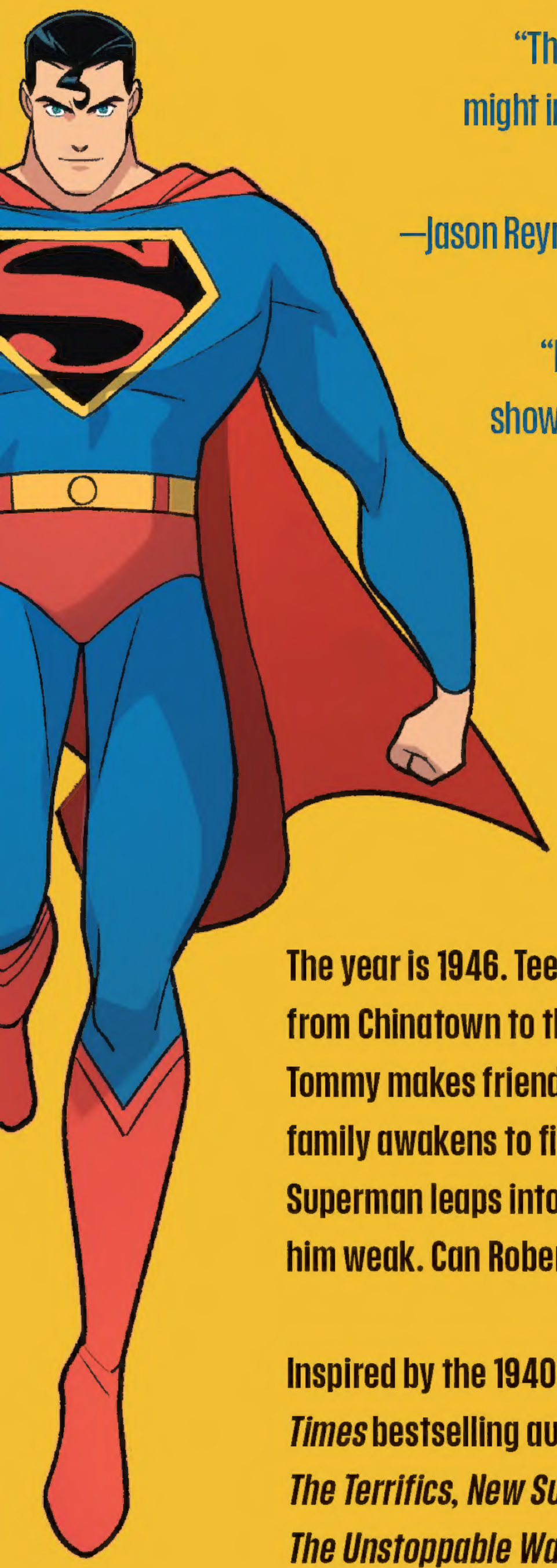
Gene Luen Yang writes, and sometimes draws, comic books and graphic novels. As the Library of Congress's fifth National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, he advocates for the importance of reading, especially reading diversely. *American Born Chinese*, his first graphic novel from First Second Books, was a National Book Award finalist, as well as the winner of the Printz Award and an Eisner Award. His companion graphic novel project *Boxers* and *Saints* won the L.A. Times Book Prize and was a National Book Award finalist. His other works include *Secret Coders* (with Mike Holmes), *The Shadow Hero* (with Sonny Liew), *Superman* from DC Comics (with various artists), and the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* series from Dark Horse Comics (with Gurihiru). In 2016, he was named a MacArthur Foundation Fellow. His most recent books are *Dragon Hoops* from First Second Books and *Superman Smashes the Klan* from DC Comics.

Gurihiru is a team name for Chifuyu Sasaki (pencils and inks) and Naoko Kawano (colors). They are freelance illustrators living in Saitama, Japan. While working on comic books published in the U.S., such as *The Unstoppable Wasp* (Marvel) and the *Avatar: The Last Airbender* graphic novel series (Dark Horse Comics) they also work on many other projects in Japan including video games, animation character designs, and book illustrations.



"The courage of the Lee family (and, of course, Superman!) might inspire readers of all ages to do the same—to be outspoken, and to stand up, whether you can fly or not."
—Jason Reynolds, #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *All American Boys*

"It's stories like *Superman Smashes the Klan* that truly showcase why Superman is a universally relatable character."
—Newsweek

The year is 1946. Teenagers Roberta and Tommy Lee just moved with their parents from Chinatown to the center of Metropolis, home to the famous hero Superman. Tommy makes friends quickly, while Roberta pines for home. Then one night, the family awakens to find their house surrounded by the Klan of the Fiery Kross! Superman leaps into action, but his exposure to a mysterious green rock has left him weak. Can Roberta and Tommy help him smash the Klan?

Inspired by the 1940s Superman radio serial "Clan of the Fiery Cross," *New York Times* bestselling author **Gene Luen Yang** (*American Born Chinese*, *Boxers* and *Saints*, *The Terrifics*, *New Super-Man*) and artists **Gurihiru** (*Avatar: The Last Airbender*, *The Unstoppable Wasp*) bring us a timely personal story of immigration, battling adversity, and finding home.

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